

# *Life of Jesus*



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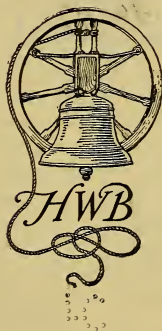
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# LIFE OF JESUS

BY

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## CHAPTER I

### *The Place of Jesus in the World's History*

The principal event in the history of the world is the revolution by which the noblest portions of humanity have forsaken the ancient religions, which are classed together under the vague name of Paganism, for a religion founded on the Divine Unity, the Trinity, and the Incarnation of the Son of God. Nearly a thousand years were required to achieve this conversion. The new religion itself took at least three hundred years in its formation. But the origin of the revolution in question is a historical event which happened in the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius. At that time there lived (a man of supreme personality, who, by his bold originality, and by the love which he was able to inspire, became the object, and settled the direction, of the future faith of mankind.)

As soon as man grew distinct from the animal he became religious—that is to say, he saw in nature something beyond reality, and, for himself, something beyond death. This feeling, during some thousands of years, went through the strangest vicissitudes. In many races it did not pass beyond belief in sorcerers, under the gross form in which it is still to be found in certain parts of Oceania. Among some peoples religious feeling degenerated into the shameful scenes of butchery which characterised the ancient religion of Mexico. Other nations, especially in Africa, have never emerged from pure fetichism—that is, the adoration

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of a material object to which supernatural powers are attributed. Like the instinct of love, which at times raises the most vulgar man above himself, yet occasionally becomes perverted and ferocious, so this divine religious faculty during long periods may seem to be nothing but a cancer which must be extirpated from the human race, a cause of errors and crimes which the wise should endeavor to suppress.

The brilliant civilisations which were developed in a very remote antiquity in China, in Babylonia, and in Egypt, effected a certain progress in religion. China soon reached a kind of mediocre good sense, which prevented great extravagances. She knew neither the advantages nor the abuses of the religious spirit. At all events, she had not in this matter any influence in directing the great current of humanity. The religions of Babylonia and Syria were never wholly liberated from a substratum of strange sensuality; these religions remained, until their extinction in the fourth and fifth centuries of our era, schools of immorality, in which at times glimpses of the divine world were gained by a sort of poetic intuition. Egypt, despite an apparent fetichism, had, at a very early date, metaphysical dogmas and a lofty symbolism. But, doubtless, these interpretations of a refined theology were not primitive. Man has never, when in possession of a clearly conceived idea, amused himself by clothing it in symbols: most often it is after long reflection that, forced by the impossibility felt by the human mind of resigning itself to the absurd, we seek ideas under ancient mystic images the meaning of which has been lost. Moreover, it is not from Egypt that the faith of mankind has emerged. The elements in the Christian religion which, passing through a thousand transformations, have come from Egypt and Syria, are external forms of little consequence, or dross which even the most purified

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forms of worship always retain. The great defect of the religions of which we speak was their essentially superstitious character. They only cast into the world millions of amulets and charms. No great moral thought could proceed from races oppressed by secular despotism, and accustomed to institutions which precluded almost all exercise of individual liberty.

The poetry of the soul, faith, liberty, rectitude and devotion, made their appearance in the world with the two great races which, in one sense, have made humanity what it is—the Indo-European and the Semitic races. The first religious intuitions of the Indo-European race were essentially naturalistic. But it was a profound and moral naturalism, a loving union of man with nature, a sweet poetry, full of feeling for the infinite—the principle, in short, of all that the Teutonic and Celtic genius, of all that a Shakespeare and a Goethe were in later days to express. It was neither religion nor ethical philosophy—it was compounded of melancholy, of tenderness, of imagination, above all else, of earnestness, the essential condition of morality and religion. But the faith of mankind could not have proceeded thence, since these ancient forms of worship had great difficulty in detaching themselves from polytheism, and did not attain to any very clear confession of belief. Brahminism has only survived to the present day by reason of the extraordinary faculty of conservation which India seems to possess. Buddhism failed in all its approaches towards the West. Druidism remained an exclusively national form of worship, without universal bearing. The Greek attempts at reform—Orpheism, the Mysteries—did not suffice to give solid nurture to the soul. Persia alone succeeded in making a religion that was dogmatic, almost monotheistic, and skillfully organised; but it is quite possible that this organisation itself was but an imitation, or borrowed. At all events,

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Persia has not converted the world; she herself, on the contrary, was converted when she saw the banner of divine unity as proclaimed by Islam appear on her frontiers.

It is the Semitic race<sup>1</sup> which has the glory of having created the religion of mankind. Far beyond the confines of history, resting in his tent free from the taint of a corrupted world, the Bedouin patriarch was preparing the faith of the whole world. A strong antipathy to the voluptuous worships of Syria, a grand simplicity of ritual, a complete absence of temples, and the idol reduced to insignificant *theraphim*, constituted his superiority. Amongst all the tribes of the nomadic Semites, that of the Beni-Israel was already marked out for immense destinies. Ancient relations with Egypt, whence resulted some elements the extent of which it is difficult to estimate, did but augment their repulsion to idolatry. A "Law" or Thora, written at a very early date on tables of stone, which they attributed to their great liberator Moses, had already become the code of monotheism, and contained, as compared with the institutions of Egypt and Chaldea, powerful germs of social equality and morality. A portable ark, surmounted by a sphinx<sup>2</sup> and having staples on each side through which bearing poles were passed, constituted all their religious apparatus; within it were deposited the sacred objects of the nation, its relics, its memorials, and lastly the "book," the journal of the tribe, always open, but to which additions

<sup>1</sup> I remind the reader that this word simply designates here the people who speak or have spoken one of the languages called Semitic. Such a designation is entirely defective; but it is one of those terms, like "Gothic architecture," "Arabic numerals," which we must preserve to be understood, even after we have demonstrated the errors they imply.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien*, 8, pl. 245; De Rougé, *Étude sur une stèle égypt. appartenant à la Bibliothèque impériale* (Paris, 1888); De Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*, p. 33; Guigniaut, *Relig. de l'antiquité*, pl. No. 173.

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were made with great discretion. The family charged with the duty of bearing the ark and watching over the portable archives, being near the book and having control over it, very soon became of importance.

The institution which was to decide the future did not come, however, from this source. The Hebrew priest did not differ greatly from the other priests of antiquity. The characteristic which essentially distinguishes Israel among theocratic peoples is, that her priesthood has always been subordinated to individual inspiration. Besides its priests, each nomadic tribe had its *nabi* or prophet, a kind of living oracle who was consulted for the solution of obscure questions supposed to require a high degree of clairvoyance. The *nabis* of Israel, organised in groups or schools, had great power. As defenders of the ancient democratic spirit, enemies of the rich, opponents of all political organisation, and of whatsoever might draw Israel into the paths of other nations, they were the true instruments of the religious pre-eminence of the Jewish people. At a very early date they expressed unlimited hopes, and when the people, in part the victims of their impolitic counsels, had been crushed by the Assyrian power, they proclaimed that a limitless kingdom was reserved for Judah, that one day Jerusalem would be the capital of the whole world, and that the entire human race would become Jews. Jerusalem with its temple appeared to them as a city set on the summit of a mountain, towards which all peoples should turn, as to an oracle whence the universal law should be proclaimed, as to the centre of an ideal kingdom, in which the human race, led into peace by Israel, should find once more the joys of paradise.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah 2: 1-4; especially 11, 12, 60-66. Micah 4: 1-5. It is to be noted that the second part of Isaiah, beginning with chapter 40, is not by the Isaiah of Hezekiah's time.

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Strange new utterances already began to make themselves heard, tending to exalt martyrdom and celebrate the power of the "man of sorrows." Respecting one of those sublime sufferers, who, like Jeremiah, stained the streets of Jerusalem with their blood, one of the inspired wrote a song upon the sufferings and triumph of the "servant of God," in which all the prophetic force of the genius of Israel seemed concentrated. "For he grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form or comeliness. . . . He was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, yet he humbled himself and opened not his mouth: as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb; yea, he opened not his mouth. . . . And they made his grave with the wicked. . . . When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand" (Isaiah 53: 2-10).

Important modifications were at the same time made in the Thora. New texts purporting to represent the true law of Moses, such as Deuteronomy, were produced, and in reality inaugurated a very different spirit from that of the old nomads. Great fanaticism was the dominant feature of this spirit. Furious believers unceasingly instigated violence against everything swerving from the worship of Jehovah, and succeeded in establishing a code of blood, in which death was the penalty for religious offences. Piety



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almost always brings singular contradictions of vehemence and mildness. This zeal, unknown to the coarser simplicity of the time of the Judges, inspired tones of moving eloquence and tender unction, such as, till then, the world had never heard. A strong inclination for social questions already made itself felt; Utopias, dreams of a perfect society, took their place in the code. The Pentateuch, a medley of patriarchal morality and ardent devotion, primitive intuitions and pious subtleties, like those that filled the souls of Hezekiah, of Josiah, and of Jeremiah, was thus consolidated in the form in which we now see it, and for ages became the absolute law of the national spirit.

This great book once created, the history of the Jewish people unfolded itself with irresistible force. The great empires which succeeded each other in Western Asia, by annihilating all its hopes of a terrestrial kingdom, cast it back on religious dreams, which it cherished with a kind of sombre passion. Caring but little for the national dynasty or political independence, it accepted all governments which left it free to practise its worship and follow its usages. Israel was henceforward to have no other guidance than that of its religious enthusiasts, no other enemies than those of the Divine unity, no other fatherland than its Law.

And this Law, it must be noted, was entirely social and moral. It was the work of men permeated with a lofty ideal of the present life, and with the belief that they had found the best means of realising it. The conviction of all was that the Thora, properly observed, could not fail to give perfect felicity. This Thora has nothing in common with the Greek or Roman "Laws," which, dealing with hardly anything but abstract right, enter little into questions of private happiness and morality. We feel beforehand that the results which will follow the Jewish law will be of a social and not a political order, that the work at which this



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people labours is a kingdom of God, not a civil commonwealth; a universal institution, not a nationality or a country.

Despite numerous failures, Israel admirably sustained this vocation. A series of pious men, Ezra, Nehemiah, Onias, the Maccabees, consumed with zeal for the Law, succeeded each other in defence of ancient institutions. The idea that Israel was a holy people, a tribe chosen by God and bound to him by covenant, took deeper and firmer root. An immense expectation filled their souls. The whole of Indo-European antiquity had placed paradise in the beginning of things; all its poets had wept a golden age that had passed away. Israel placed the age of gold in the future. The Psalms, the eternal poesy of religious souls, blossomed from this exalted piety, with their divine and melancholy harmonies. Israel became truly and specially the people of God, whilst around about her the pagan religions decayed more and more, in Persia and Babylonia to an official charlatanism, in Egypt and Syria to gross idolatry, and in the Greek and Roman world to mere parade. What the Christian martyrs effected in the first centuries of our era, what the victims of persecuting orthodoxy have effected in the very bosom of Christianity up to our own time, the Jews effected during the two centuries preceding the Christian era. They were a living protest against superstition and religious materialism. An extraordinary movement of ideas, leading up to the most antagonistic results, made them, at this epoch, the most striking and original people in the world. Their dispersion along all the Mediterranean coast, and the use of the Greek language, which they adopted when out of Palestine, prepared the way for a propagandism, of which ancient societies, divided as they were into small nationalities, had till then offered no example.

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Down to the time of the Maccabees, Judaism, in spite of its persistence in announcing that one day it would be the religion of the human race, had had the characteristic of all the other religions of antiquity; it was a family and tribal religion. The Israelite thought, indeed, that his worship was the best, and spoke with contempt of strange gods; but he also believed that the religion of the true God was made for himself alone. Only when a man entered into the Jewish family did he embrace the worship of Jehovah. No Israelite dreamed of converting a stranger to a worship which was the patrimony of the sons of Abraham. The development of the pietistic spirit, after Ezra and Nehemiah, led to a much firmer and more logical conception. Judaism became the true religion in an absolute sense; to all who wished, the right of entering it was given (Esther 9: 27), and it soon became a work of piety to bring into it the greatest number possible.<sup>4</sup> No doubt the generous feeling which raised John the Baptist, Jesus, and St. Paul above petty ideas of race, was not yet existent; for, by a strange contradiction, these converts, or proselytes, were little respected and were treated with disdain.<sup>5</sup> But the idea of a sovereign religion, the idea that there is in the world something higher than country, than blood, than laws—the idea that makes apostles and martyrs—was founded. Profound pity for pagans, however brilliant their worldly fortune might be, was henceforth the feeling of every Jew.<sup>6</sup> By a cycle of legends destined to furnish models of inflex-

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 23: 15. Josephus, *Life*, 23; *Wars*, 2, 17: 10; 7, 3: 3; *Antiq.* 22, 2: 4. Horace, *Sat.* 1, 4: 143. Juvenal, *Sat.* 14: 96 *et seq.* Tacitus, *Ann.* 2: 85; *Hist.* 5: 5. Dion Cassius 37: 17. (Slaves were often emancipated on condition of remaining Jews. Lévy (of Breslau), *Epigr. Beiträge zur Gesch. der Juden*, 229 *et seq.*)

<sup>5</sup> Mishna, *Schebiit*, 10: 9. Babyl. Talmud, *Niddah*, 13 b; *Jebamoth*, 47 b; *Kidduschin*, 70 b. Midrash, *Jalkut Ruth*, 163 d.

<sup>6</sup> Apocr. epistle of Baruch, in Fabricius, *Cod. pseud. V. T.*, 2: 147 *et seq.*, and in Ceriani, *Monum. sacra et profana*, 1, 2: 96 *et seq.*

ible firmness, such as the histories of Daniel and his companions, the mother of the Maccabees and her seven sons,<sup>7</sup> the romance of the racecourse of Alexandria,<sup>8</sup> the guides of the people sought above all to inculcate the idea that virtue consists in fanatical attachment to fixed religious institutions.

The persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes made this idea become a passion, almost a frenzy. It was something very analogous to what happened in the reign of Nero, two hundred and thirty years later. Rage and despair cast believers into the world of visions and dreams. The first apocalypse, the Book of Daniel, appeared. It was like a revival of prophecy, but under a very different form from that of the ancient prophecies, and taking a much wider view of the destinies of the world. The Book of Daniel gave, in a manner, final expression to the messianic hopes. The Messiah was no longer a king, after the manner of David and Solomon, a theocratic and Mosaic Cyrus; he was a "Son of man" appearing in the clouds (7: 13, 14)—a supernatural being, invested with human form, who was to rule the world and preside over the golden age. Perhaps the *Sosiosh* of Persia, the great prophet who was to come charged with preparing for the reign of Ormuzd, lent some features to this new ideal.<sup>9</sup> The unknown author of the Book of Daniel had, in any case, a decisive influence on the religious crisis which was about to transform the world. He created the *mise-en-scène* and the technical terms of the new messianic ideal; and we might apply to him what

<sup>7</sup> 2 Macc. 7 and the *De Maccabæis* (ascribed to Josephus). Compare Hebrews, 11: 33-38.

<sup>8</sup> 3 Maccabees (apocryphal); Rufinus, *Supplem.* and Josephus, *Contra Apionem*, 2: 5.

<sup>9</sup> *Vendidad*, 19: 18, 19; *Minokhired*, a passage published in the *Zeitschr. der deutsch. morgenländ. Gesellschaft*, 1: 263; *Bouندهesch*, 31. The lack of accurate chronology for the Zend and Pehlevi texts leaves much that is obscure upon these relations between Persian and Jewish beliefs.

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Jesus said of John the Baptist: "Before him, the prophets; after him, the kingdom of God." A few years later the same ideas came to light again, under the name of the patriarch Enoch. Essenism, which seems to have had direct relations with the apocalyptic school, had its birth about the same time,<sup>10</sup> and gave as it were a foretaste of the great system of discipline which was soon to be constituted for the human race.

It need not, however, be supposed that this profoundly religious and soul-stirring movement had special dogmas for its primary impulse, as was the case in all the controversies which have broken forth in the bosom of Christianity. The Jew of this epoch was as little theological as possible. He did not speculate upon the essence of the Deity; beliefs about angels, about the destinies of man, about the divine hypostases, the first germs of which might already be perceived, were free beliefs—meditations, to which each one surrendered himself according to the turn of his mind, but of which a great many people had never heard. Those indeed were the most orthodox who stood aloof from all such personal imaginations and adhered to the simplicity of the Mosaic system. No dogmatic power analogous to that which orthodox Christianity has conferred on the Church then existed. It was only at the beginning of the third century, when Christianity had fallen into the hands of argumentative races, mad with dialectic and metaphysics, that the fever for definitions commenced which makes the history of the Church the history of one immense controversy. There were disputes also among the Jews—excited schools of thought brought antagonistic solutions to almost all questions under discussion; but in these conflicts, the principal details of which have been preserved

<sup>10</sup> The first distinct mention of the Essenes is found about 106 B.C. in Josephus, *Antiquities* 13, 5: 9; *Wars*, 1, 3: 5.

in the Talmud, there is not a single word of speculative theology. To observe and maintain the Law, because the Law was just, and because, when faithfully observed, it gave happiness—such was Judaism in entirety. No *credo*, no theoretical symbol. One of the disciples of the boldest Arabic philosophy, Moses Maimonides, was able to become the oracle of the synagogue because he was well versed in canonical law.

The reigns of the last Asmoneans, and that of Herod, saw the excitement wax still greater. They were filled with an uninterrupted succession of religious movements. In the same measure that political power became secularised and passed into the hands of sceptics, the Jewish people lived less and less for the earth, and became more and more absorbed in the strange travail which was labouring within it. The world at large, distracted by other spectacles, had no knowledge of what was taking place in this forgotten corner of the East. Minds abreast of their age were, however, better informed. The tender and clear-sighted Virgil seems to respond, as by a secret echo, to the second Isaiah; the birth of a child casts him into dreams of a universal new birth.<sup>11</sup> Such dreams were of common occurrence, and formed a kind of literature which was designated Sibylline. The quite recent establishment of the Empire exalted men's imaginations; the great era of peace on which the world was entering, and that impression of melancholy sensibility which the mind experiences after long periods of revolution, gave birth on all sides to illimitable hopes.

In Judæa expectation was at its height. Holy persons—

<sup>11</sup> Eclogue 4. The "Cumæan Song" (5: 4) was a sort of Sibylline apocalypse, stamped with the philosophy of history familiar to the East. See Servius on this verse, and the *Carmina Sibyllina*, 3: 97-817. (Cf. Tac. *Hist.* 5: 13; Suet. *Vesp.* 4; Josephus, *Wars*, 6, 5: 4.)

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among whom legend relates of an aged Simeon, who was said to have held Jesus in his arms, and of Anna, daughter of Phanuel, who was regarded as a prophetess—passed their lives about the temple, fasting, and praying that it might please God not to take them from the world before they had beheld the fulfilment of the hopes of Israel. They felt a powerful presentiment; they were sensible of the approach of something unknown.

This confused medley of clear views and dreams, this alternation of deceptions and hopes, these aspirations, unceasingly driven back by odious reality, found at length their interpretation in the peerless man to whom the universal conscience has decreed the title of Son of God, and that with justice, since he gave religion an impetus greater than that which any other man has been capable of giving—an impetus with which, in all probability, no farther advance will be comparable.



## CHAPTER II

### *The Childhood and Youth of Jesus*

Jesus was born at Nazareth,<sup>12</sup> a small town in Galilee, which before his time was not known to fame.<sup>13</sup> All his life he was called by the name of "the Nazarene,"<sup>14</sup> and it is only by a somewhat far-fetched and contradictory hypothesis that, in the legends respecting him, he is described as having been born at Bethlehem.<sup>15</sup> We shall see

<sup>12</sup> Matt. 13: 54-57; Mark 6: 1-4; John 1: 45-46.

<sup>13</sup> It is not mentioned in the Old Testament, Josephus, or the Talmud; but the name occurs in the liturgy of Kalir, for the ninth of Ab.

<sup>14</sup> Matt. 26: 71. Mark 1: 24; 14: 67. Luke 18: 37; 24: 19. John 19: 19. Acts 2: 22; 3: 6; 10: 38 (cf. John 7: 41, 42. Acts 4: 10; 6: 14; 22: 8; 26: 9). Hence the name "Nazarenes" (Acts 24: 5), long given to the Christians by the Jews, and still denoting them in all Mussulman countries.

<sup>15</sup> A circumstance invented to correspond with Micah 5: 2. The "taxing" (enrolment) made by Cyrenius (Quirinius), with which the journey to Bethlehem is connected, was at least ten years later than the date of Jesus' birth, according to Matthew and Luke. In fact, these two evangelists place his birth during the reign of Herod (Matt. 2: 1, 19, 22; Luke 1: 5). Now, the census of Quirinius did not take place till after the deposal of Archelaus, that is, ten years after Herod's death, and in the thirty-seventh after the battle of Actium (Josephus, *Antiquities*, 17, 13: 5; 18, 1: 1; 2: 1). The inscription by which it was formerly thought to be made out that Quirinius made two enrolments is acknowledged to be spurious (see Orelli, *Inscr. Lat.* No. 623, with Henzen's supplement; Borghesi, *Fasti consulares*, unedited, under the year 742). Quirinius may have been twice *legatus* of Syria; but the registration took place only in his second term (Mommson *Res gestæ divi Augusti*, Berlin, 1865, p. 11 *et seq.*). The "taxing," at all events, would have applied to the regions made into a Roman province, not to kingdoms and tetrarchies, above all in the lifetime of Herod the Great. The texts by which it is sought to prove that some of the operations of statistics and registry ordered by Augustus extended to the dominion of the Herods, either imply nothing of the sort, or are the work of Christian writers who have taken this item from Luke's Gospel. What further clearly proves that the journey of the family of Joseph to Bethlehem



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later the motive for this hypothesis, and how it was the necessary consequence of the Messianic character attributed to Jesus.<sup>16</sup> The precise date of his birth is unknown. It took place in the reign of Augustus, about the Roman year 750,<sup>17</sup> probably some years before the year 1 of the era which all civilised peoples date from the day of his birth.<sup>18</sup>

The name of *Jesus*, which was given him, is *Joshua* in an altered form. It was a very common name; but afterwards people naturally sought for mystical interpretations and an allusion to his character of Saviour in it.<sup>19</sup> It may be that Jesus, like all mystics, exalted himself in this respect. More than one great vocation in history has been discovered thus by a name given to a child without premeditation. Ardent natures never resign themselves to seeing aught of chance in what concerns them. For them, is in no way historical, is its assigned motive. Jesus was not of the family of David (see chapter 15); and even if he were, it could not be supposed that his parents would be compelled, for a mere official formality, to go and register themselves in a place which their ancestors had left a thousand years before. In forcing on them such an obligation, the Roman authority would have fostered pretensions very threatening to itself.

<sup>16</sup> Matt. 2: 1-6; Luke 2: 1-5. That this account is lacking in Mark, with the two parallel passages (Matt. 13: 54; Mark 6: 1) in which Nazareth appears as the "own country" of Jesus, proves that no such legend belonged to the earliest text that gave the outline of the narrative as now found in Matthew and Mark. In view of the oft-repeated objections, there were prefixed to Matthew's Gospel certain qualified statements not so flagrantly contradicting the rest of the story as to compel the alteration of passages composed from quite another point of view. Luke, on the contrary (4: 16), writing with deliberation, has for consistency's sake softened his expression. The fourth evangelist knows nothing of the journey to Bethlehem: for him, Jesus is simply "of Nazareth" (John 1: 46), or "from Galilee" (ibid. 7: 41), on two occasions when it would have been of the highest value to recall his birth at Bethlehem.

<sup>17</sup> Matt. 2: 1, 19, 22; Luke 1: 5. Herod died early in the year of Rome 750, corresponding with B.C. 4.

<sup>18</sup> The calculation serving as the basis of the vulgar era (it is well known) was made by Dionysius Exiguus in the sixth century. It implies certain data purely hypothetical.

<sup>19</sup> Matt. 1: 21; Luke 1: 31.

all has been regulated by God; and they perceive a sign of the supreme will in the most insignificant circumstances.

The population of Galilee was very much mixed in race, as indeed the name of the country indicated.<sup>20</sup> In the population of the province, in the time of Jesus, there were many who were not Jews,—Phœnicians, Syrians, Arabs, and even Greeks.<sup>21</sup> Conversions to Judaism were by no means rare in mixed countries of this kind. It is therefore impossible to discuss here any question of race, and endeavour to ascertain what blood flowed in the veins of him who has contributed most to efface distinctions of blood amongst mankind.

Jesus came from the ranks of the common folk.<sup>22</sup> His father Joseph and his mother Mary were people in humble circumstances, artisans living by their handiwork<sup>23</sup> in that state, so common in the East, which is neither ease nor poverty. The extreme simplicity of life in such countries, by dispensing with the need of comfort, renders the privileges of the man of wealth almost useless, and makes every one voluntarily poor. On the other hand, the total lack of appreciation of art, and all that contributes to the beauty of material life, gives a bare appearance to the house of one who otherwise wants for nothing. Apart from something sordid and repulsive which Islamism bears everywhere with it, the town of Nazareth, in the time of Jesus, did not differ greatly perhaps from what it is to-day.<sup>24</sup> We

<sup>20</sup> *Gelil haggoyim*, "circle of the Gentiles."

<sup>21</sup> Strabo, 16: 2, 35. Josephus, *Life*, 12.

<sup>22</sup> The source of the genealogies designed to trace his descent from David will be explained below (chapter 15). The Ebionites consistently suppressed these genealogies (Epiphanius, *Adv. Hæer.* 30: 14).

<sup>23</sup> Matt. 13: 55; Mark 6: 3; John 6: 42.

<sup>24</sup> The rude aspect of the ruins that cover Palestine proves that the towns not rebuilt after the Roman manner were very ill built. The form of Syrian houses is so simple, and so imperatively required by the climate, that it never can have much changed.

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see the streets, where he played when a child, in the stony paths or little lanes which separate the dwellings from each other. No doubt the house of Joseph much resembled those poor domiciles, lighted only by the doorway, serving at once as workshop, kitchen, and bedroom, and having for furniture a mat, some cushions on the ground, one or two clay pots, and a painted chest.

The family, whether it was the issue of one or several marriages, was somewhat large. Jesus had brothers and sisters<sup>25</sup> who seem to have been younger than he.<sup>26</sup> They all remained obscure, for it appears that the four men who were called his brothers, and among whom one at least, James, became of great importance in the early years of the development of Christianity, were his cousins-german. Mary, in fact, had a sister, also named Mary,<sup>27</sup> who married a certain Alpheus or Cleophas (these names appear to designate the same person)<sup>28</sup> and was the mother of several sons who were of considerable importance among the first disciples of Jesus. These cousins-german, who adhered to the young Master while his own brothers opposed him

<sup>25</sup> Matt. 1: 25 (common reading); 12: 46-50; 13: 55, 56. Mark 3: 31-35; 6: 3. Luke 2: 7; 8: 19-21. John 2: 12; 7: 3, 5, 10. Acts 1: 14. Hegesippus (Euseb. *H. E.* 3: 20). The assertion that *ah* ("brother") has a wider sense in Hebrew than with us is wholly false; its meaning is identically the same. Abuse and metaphoric or mistaken use prove nothing. When a preacher calls his hearers "my brethren," do we infer that the word "brother" has no well-defined meaning? In the passages just cited, it is clear that the word has no figurative sense. Note especially Matt. 12: 46-50, which equally forbids the loose rendering "cousin."

<sup>26</sup> Matt. 1: 25; Luke 2: 7. There are critical doubts on the text in Matthew, but not on that in Luke.

<sup>27</sup> It is certainly a singular circumstance that these two sisters have the same name. There is probably some inaccuracy, arising from the habit of almost indiscriminately calling Galilean women "Mary."

<sup>28</sup> They are not etymologically the same. *Ἀλφαῖος* is a transcription of the Syro-Chaldaic name *Halphai*; *κλωπᾶς*, or *κλεόπας*, is a shortened form of *κλεόπατρος*. But one may have been artificially substituted for the other,—as "Joseph" is made *Hegesippus*, "Eliakim" *Alcimus*, etc.

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(John 7: 5), took the title of "brothers of the Lord."<sup>29</sup> The real brothers of Jesus, like their mother, became of note only after his death. Even then their reputation does not appear to have equalled that of their cousins, whose conversion had been more spontaneous, and whose characters seem to have had more originality. Their names were so little known that, when the evangelist puts in the mouth of the men of Nazareth the enumeration of the brothers according to natural relationship, the names of the sons of Cleophas are the first to present themselves to him.

The sisters of Jesus were married at Nazareth, and there he spent the early years of his youth. Nazareth was a small town, situated in a hollow opening broadly at the summit of the group of mountains which shuts in the plain of Esdraelon on the north. The population is now from three to four thousand, and can never have varied much.<sup>30</sup> The cold is sharp in winter, and the climate very healthy. The town, like all the small Jewish towns at that period, was a group of huts shabbily built, and must have presented that

<sup>29</sup> In fact, the four named (Matt. 13: 55; Mark 6: 3) as "brothers" of Jesus—James, Joses (or Joseph), Simon, and Judas—are all, or nearly all, found as sons of Mary and Cleophas (Matt. 27: 56; Mark 15: 40, 16: 1; Luke 24: 10; Gal. 1: 19; Jas. 1: 1; Jude 1; Euseb. *Chron.* A.U.C. 810; *H. E.* 3: 11, 22, 32, after Hegesippus; *Const. Apost.* 7: 46). The suggestion here proposed is the only relief to the great difficulty of supposing two sisters having each three or four sons with the same names; and of admitting that James and Simon, the first two bishops of Jerusalem, called "brothers of the Lord," were real brothers of Jesus, who began by opposing him, but were afterwards converted. The evangelist, hearing the sons of Cleophas called "brothers of the Lord," wrote their names by mistake in the passage (Matt. 13: 55=Mark 6: 3) instead of the unknown names of the real brothers. Thus we see how those called "brothers of the Lord"—James, for example—are so different in character from the real brothers of Jesus as indicated in John 7: 3-5. The expression "the Lord's brothers" evidently designated, in the primitive church, a sort of rank similar to the apostolic (see especially Gal. 1: 19; 1 Cor. 9: 5).

<sup>30</sup> According to Josephus (*Wars*, 3, 3: 2) the smallest Galilean town had at least 15,000 inhabitants. This is doubtless exaggeration.

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forbidding and poverty-stricken aspect which is still characteristic of villages in the East. The houses, it would seem, did not differ much from those cubes of stone, elegant neither without nor within, which at the present day cover the richest parts of Lebanon, and which, buried as they are amid vines and fig-trees, are, in some respects, very pleasing. The surroundings moreover are charming; and no place in the world could be so well adapted for dreams of perfect happiness. Even in our time Nazareth is still a delightful abode, perhaps the only place in Palestine in which the mind feels relieved of the burden which oppresses it in that land of unparalleled desolation. The people are pleasant and cheerful; the gardens fresh and green. Anthony the Martyr, writing at the end of the sixth century, draws an enchanting picture of the fertility of the neighbourhood, which he compares to Paradise. Some valleys on the western side amply justify his description. The fountain, formerly the centre of the life and gaiety of the little town, is destroyed; its broken channels now contain only a muddy stream. But the beauty of the women who assemble there in the evening—that beauty which was remarked even in the sixth century, and was regarded as a gift of the Virgin Mary—is still preserved in a striking manner. It is the Syrian type in all its languid grace. No doubt Mary was there almost every day, and, with her jar on her shoulder, took her place with the rest of her neighbours who have remained in oblivion. Anthony the Martyr observes that the Jewish women, elsewhere disdainful to Christians, were here full of good feeling. Even now religious hatred is weaker at Nazareth than in the rest of the country.

The view from the town is limited; but if we ascend a little to the plateau, swept by a perpetual breeze, which stands above the highest houses, the landscape is magnificent. On the west stretch the fine outlines of Carmel,



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terminating in an abrupt spur which seems to run down sheer to the sea. Next, one sees the double summit which towers above Megiddo; the mountains of the country of Shechem, with their holy places of the patriarchal period; the hills of Gilboa, the small picturesque group to which is attached the graceful or terrible recollections of Shunem and of Endor; and Tabor, with its beautiful rounded form, which antiquity compared to a bosom. Through a gap between the mountains of Shunem and Tabor are visible the valley of the Jordan and the high plains of Peræa, which form a continuous line from the eastern side. On the north, the mountains of Safed, stretching towards the sea, conceal St. Jean d'Acre, but leave the Gulf of Khaïfa in sight. Such was the horizon of Jesus. This enchanted circle, cradle of the kingdom of God, was for years his world. Indeed, during his whole life he went but little beyond the familiar bounds of his childhood. For yonder, northwards, one can almost see, on the flank of Hermon, Cæsarea-Philippi, his farthest point of advance into the Gentile world; and to the south the less smiling aspect of these Samaritan hills foreshadows the dreariness of Judæa beyond, parched as by a burning wind of desolation and death.

If the world, remaining Christian but attaining to a better idea of that which constitutes a fitting respect for the beginnings of its religion, should ever wish to replace by authentic holy places the mean and apocryphal sanctuaries to which the piety of less enlightened ages was attached, it is upon this mountain height of Nazareth that it would build its temple anew. There, at the birthplace of Christianity, and in the centre of the deeds of its Founder, ought the great church to be raised in which all Christians should worship. Here, too, on this spot where Joseph the carpenter sleeps with thousands of forgotten Nazarenes

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who never passed beyond the horizon of their valley, the philosopher would find a place, better than any in the world beside, to contemplate human affairs in their courses, to console himself for their incertitude, and to win fresh assurance of the divine end which the world pursues through innumerable falterings and despite the vanity of all things.



## CHAPTER III

### *The Education of Jesus*

These natural surroundings, at once smiling and impressive, formed the whole education of Jesus. No doubt he learnt to read and write (John 8: 6) according to the Eastern method, which consists in putting in the child's hands a book, which he repeats in cadence with his little comrades, until he knows it by heart.<sup>31</sup> It is doubtful, however, if he fully understood the Hebrew writings in their original tongue. His biographers make him cite them according to translations in the Aramean language;<sup>32</sup> his exegetical principles, so far as we can judge of them from his disciples, much resembled those then in vogue, which represent the spirit of the *Targummim* and the *Midrashim*.<sup>33</sup>

The schoolmaster in small Jewish towns was the *hazzan*, or reader in the synagogues.<sup>34</sup> Jesus frequented but little the higher schools of the scribes or *soferim*.<sup>35</sup> There were perhaps none in Nazareth, and he was not possessed of any of those titles which, in the eyes of the vulgar, confer the privileges of knowledge. Nevertheless, it would be a great error to imagine that Jesus was what we should call an ignorant man. Amongst us scholastic education draws a great distinction, in respect of personal worth, between those who have received it and those who have not had the

<sup>31</sup> Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, Levi 6.

<sup>32</sup> Matt. 27: 46; Mark 15: 34.

<sup>33</sup> Jewish translations and commentaries of the Old Testament books.

<sup>34</sup> Mishna, *Schabbath*, 1: 3.

<sup>35</sup> Matt. 13: 54; John 7: 15.

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opportunity. It was not so in the East, or indeed anywhere in the good old times. The state of ignorance in which, owing to our isolated and entirely individualistic way of living, those amongst us remain who have not passed through the schools is unknown in those societies where moral culture, and, above all, the general spirit of the age, are transmitted by the perpetual contact of man with man. The Arab who has never had a teacher is often nevertheless a man of great distinction; for the tent is a kind of school always open, where, from the intercourse of well-bred men, is produced a great intellectual, even literary, movement. Refinement of manners and acuteness of intellect have, in the East, nothing in common with what we call education. It is the men of the schools, on the contrary, who are considered as being pedantic, and wanting in manners. In a social state such as this, ignorance, which with us condemns a man to an inferior position, is the condition of great things and of high originality.

In all probability Jesus did not know Greek. The language was spread but little in Judæa beyond the classes who took part in the Government, and the towns inhabited by pagans, like Cæsarea.<sup>36</sup> The real mother-tongue of Jesus was the Syrian dialect mingled with Hebrew, which was then spoken in Palestine.<sup>37</sup> Still less is it probable that

<sup>36</sup> Mishna, *Schekalim*, 3: 2. Jerusalem Talmud, *Megilla*, halaca 11; *Sota*, 7: 1. Babyl. Talmud, *Baba kama*, 83 a, *Megilla*, 8 b et seq.

<sup>37</sup> Matt. 27: 46. Mark 3: 17; 5: 41; 7: 34; 14: 36; 15: 34. The expression ἡ πατριος φωνή in the writers of this time, always signifies the Semitic dialect spoken in Palestine (2 Macc. 7: 21, 27; 12: 37. Acts 21: 37, 40; 22: 2; 26: 14. Jos. *Antiq.* 18, 6: 10; 20, 11: 2; and *Wars*, Procem. 1; 5, 6: 3; 9: 2; 6, 2: 1. *C. Apion.* 1: 9; *de Macc.* 12, 16). It will be shown, later on, that some of the documents serving as the groundwork of the Synoptic Gospels were written in this Semitic dialect. It was the same with several apocryphal writings (4 Macc. 16 *ad calcem*). In short, the Christianity which sprang directly from the Galilean movement (Nazarene, Ebionite, etc.), which long subsisted in Batanæa and Hauran, employed a Semitic dialect (Euseb. *De Situ*, etc., s. v.

he had any acquaintance with Greek culture. Such culture was proscribed by the doctors of Palestine, who included in the same curse "him who rears swine, and him who teaches his son Greek learning."<sup>38</sup> In any case it had not penetrated in little towns like Nazareth. It is true that, notwithstanding the anathema of the doctors, some Jews had already embraced Hellenic culture. Apart from the Jewish school of Egypt, in which attempts to amalgamate Hellenism and Judaism had been continued for nearly two hundred years, a Jew, Nicholas of Damascus, had become, even at this time, one of the most distinguished, one of the best informed, and one of the most respected men of his age. Josephus was soon to furnish another example of a Jew completely Hellenised. But Nicholas was only a Jew in blood. Josephus declares himself to have been an exception among his contemporaries; and the whole schismatic school of Egypt was so far detached from Jerusalem, that we do not find the least allusion to it either in the Talmud or in Jewish tradition. What is certain is, that Greek was very little studied at Jerusalem; Greek studies were regarded as dangerous, and even servile, and at best considered as an accomplishment for women.<sup>39</sup> The study of the Law was alone accounted liberal and worthy a serious man's attention.<sup>40</sup> Questioned as to the time at which it would be right to teach children "the wisdom of the Greeks," a learned Rabbi answered, "At the time which is neither day nor night; since it is written of the Law, Thou shalt study it day and night."<sup>41</sup>

Χωβᾶ, Epiph. *Adv. hæ.* 29: 7, 9; 30: 3. Jerome, *In Matt.* 12: 13; *Dial. adv. Pelag.* 3: 2).

<sup>38</sup> Mishna, *Sanhedrin*, 11: 1. Babyl. Talmud, *Baba kama*, 82 b, 83 a; *Sota*, 49 a, b; *Menachoth*, 64 b (cf. 2 Macc. 4: 10).

<sup>39</sup> Jerusalem Talmud, *Peah*. 1: 1.

<sup>40</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.* 20, 11: 2; Origen, *Contra Celsum* 2: 34.

<sup>41</sup> Jerus. Talmud, *Peah*, 1: 1; Babyl. Talmud, *Menachoth*, 99 b.

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Neither directly nor indirectly, then, did any element of secular teaching reach Jesus. He was ignorant of all beyond Judaism; his mind kept that free innocence which an extended and varied culture always weakens. In the very bosom of Judaism he remained a stranger to many efforts often moving on the same lines as his own. On the one hand, the ascetic life of the Essenes or the Therapeutæ;<sup>42</sup> on the other, the fine speculations in religious philosophy made by the Jewish school at Alexandria, of which Philo, his contemporary, was the ingenious interpreter, were unknown to him. The frequent resemblances to be found between him and Philo, those excellent maxims about the love of God, charity, rest in God,<sup>43</sup> which seem as it were to echo between the Gospel and the writings of the illustrious Alexandrian thinker, are derived from the common tendencies, inspired by the necessities of the age in all lofty minds.

Happily for him, he was also ignorant of the grotesque scholasticism which was taught at Jerusalem, and was soon to constitute the Talmud. If some Pharisees had already imported it into Galilee, he did not associate with them, and when, in later life, he encountered this foolish casuistry, it only filled him with disgust. It may well be conjectured, however, that the principles of Hillel were not unknown to him. Hillel, fifty years before him, had given utterance to aphorisms presenting many analogies to his own. By his meekly endured poverty, by the sweetness of his character, by his opposition to priests and hypocrites, Hillel was the

<sup>42</sup> The Therapeutæ of Philo are a branch of the Essenes. The name even, seems to be only a Greek translation of the word (ἑσσηῖται, *asaya*, "healers"). See Philo, *De Vita contempl.* 1; Josephus, *Wars*, 2, 8: 6; Epiphan. *Adv. hæres.* 29: 4. The Essenes do not once appear in the early Christian writings.

<sup>43</sup> See, in particular, Philo's *Quis rerum divinarum hæres sit*, and *De Philanthropia*.

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true master of Jesus,<sup>44</sup> if indeed it be permitted to speak of a master in connection with one of such high originality as the latter.

The reading of the books of the Old Testament made much more impression upon him. The canon of the holy books was composed of two chief parts—the Law, that is to say the Pentateuch, and the Prophets, such as we now possess them. A vast allegorical exegesis was applied to all these books, with the purpose of drawing from them something that was not in them, but which answered to the aspirations of the age. The Law, which represented not the ancient laws of the country, but rather Utopias, the factitious laws and pious frauds of the period of the pietistic kings, had become, since the nation had ceased to govern itself, an inexhaustible theme for subtle interpretations. As to the Prophets and the Psalms, the popular belief was that almost all the somewhat mysterious traits in these books referred to the Messiah; and people sought to find in them the type of him who should realise the hopes of the nation. Jesus participated in the taste which every one possessed for these allegorical interpretations. But the true poetry of the Bible, which escaped the puerile exegetists of Jerusalem, was fully revealed to his great genius. The Law does not appear to have had much charm for him: he believed that he could do better. But the religious poetry of the Psalms was in marvellous accordance with his lyrical soul; all his life they were his sustenance and his support. The prophets—Isaiah in particular, and his successor in the epoch of the captivity—with their brilliant dreams of the future, their impetuous eloquence, and their invectives mingled with enchanting imagery, were his real masters. No doubt, he also read many apocryphal works—that is

<sup>44</sup> *Pirke Aboth*, 1, 2. Jerus Talmud, *Pesachim*, 6: 1. Babyl. Talmud, *Pesachim*, 66 a; *Schabbath*, 30 b, 31 a; *Joma*, 35 b.

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to say somewhat modern writings, the authors of which, to give themselves an authority only accorded to very ancient scriptures, had sheltered themselves under the names of prophets and patriarchs. One of these books especially attracted him,—the book of Daniel.<sup>45</sup> This book, written by an impassioned Jew of the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and attached by him to the name of an ancient sage,<sup>46</sup> formed a *résumé* of the spirit of those later times. Its author, the true creator of the philosophy of history, was the first who dared to see in the general progress of the world and the succession of its empires, only a purpose subordinate to the destinies of the Jewish people. Early in life Jesus was possessed by these high hopes. Perhaps, too, he had read the books of Enoch,<sup>47</sup> then held in equal reverence with the sacred books, and the other writings of the same kind which kept the popular imagination so active. The advent of the Messiah, with his glories and his terrors—the nations crumbling down to ruin on one another, the cataclysm of heaven and earth,—in such ideas his imagination found constant sustenance; and, as these revolutions were proclaimed to be at hand, and a great number of persons endeavoured to prognosticate the time when they should come to pass, the supernatural state of feeling into which such visions transport us, appeared to him from the first as being perfectly natural and simple.

<sup>45</sup> Matt. 24: 15; Mark 13: 14.

<sup>46</sup> The legend of Daniel was already shaped in the seventh century B.C. (Ezek. 14: 14, 20; 28: 3). It was afterward supposed that he had lived at the time of the Captivity in Babylon.

<sup>47</sup> Jude 6, 14; 2 Pet. 2: 4, 11; Test. of the Twelve Patriarchs (Simeon 5; Levi 10, 14, 16; Judah 18; Zeb. 3; Dan. 5; Benj. 9; Naphtali 4); Ep. Barn. 4, 16 (cod. Sinait.; see Introd. pp. 41, 42). The Book of Enoch still forms part of the Ethiopic Bible. As we know it in the Ethiopic version, it is composed of portions of various dates. [See *Hist. of Israel*, 5: 20, n.] Several have a likeness to the discourses of Jesus (cf. chaps. 96–99 with Luke 6: 24–26).



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That Jesus had no knowledge of the general state of the world is evident from every feature of his most authentic discourses. To him the earth appeared to be still divided into kingdoms warring with one another; he seemed to be ignorant of the "Roman peace" and the new state of society which was inaugurated in his time. He had no precise idea of the Roman power; the name of "Cæsar" alone reached him. He saw, in course of construction, in Galilee or its environs, Tiberias, Julias, Diocæsarea, Cæsarea, stately works of the Herods who sought, by erecting these magnificent buildings, to prove their admiration for Roman civilisation, and their devotion towards the members of the family of Augustus, whose names, by a caprice of fate, now serve, grotesquely altered, to designate miserable Bedouin hamlets. Probably he also saw Sebaste, the work of Herod the Great, a showy city, the ruins of which would lead one to believe that it had been brought to its site ready made, like a machine which had only to be put together and set up. This ostentatious piece of architecture which arrived in Judæa by ship-loads, these hundreds of columns, all of uniform diameter, the ornament of some insipid "*Rue de Rivoli*"—these were what he called "the kingdoms of the world and all their glory." But this autocratic luxuriousness, this administrative and official art, displeased him. What he loved were his Galilean villages, confused masses of huts, of nests and holes cut in the rocks, of wells, of tombs, of fig-trees, and of olives. He always clung close to nature. The courts of kings appeared to him as places where people wear fine clothes (Matt. 9: 8). The charming impossibilities of which his parables are full, when he brings kings and the mighty ones of the earth into the story,<sup>48</sup> prove that he never conceived of aristocratic

<sup>48</sup> See for example Matt. 22: 2-14.



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society, save as a young villager who sees the world through the prism of his simplicity.

Still less had Jesus any knowledge of the new idea, created by Hellenic science, and fully confirmed by modern thought, which is the basis of all philosophy, to wit, the exclusion of the supernatural forces, to which the simple belief of early times attributed the government of the universe. Almost a century before him, Lucretius had admirably expressed the immutability of the general system of nature. The negation of miracle—the idea that everything in the world is caused by laws in which the personal intervention of higher beings has no part—was universally admitted in the great schools of all the countries which had accepted Greek science. Perhaps even Babylon and Persia were not strangers to it. Of this progress Jesus knew nothing. Although born at a time when the principles of positive science had already been proclaimed, he lived entirely in supernatural ideas. Never, perhaps, had the Jews been more possessed with the thirst for the marvellous. Philo, who dwelt in a great intellectual centre and had received a very thorough education, possessed only a chimerical and valueless knowledge of science.

On this point Jesus differed in no respect from his countrymen. He believed in the devil, whom he figured as a kind of evil genius (Matt. 6: 13), and he imagined, like everybody else, that nervous diseases were caused by demons who possessed the patient and agitated him. To him the marvellous was not the exceptional but the normal state of things. The idea of the impossibilities of the supernatural is coincident with the beginnings of the experimental science of nature. The man who is destitute of any notion of physical laws, who believes that by praying he can change the clouds in their courses, stay disease and even death, finds nothing extraordinary in miracle, since

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to him the whole course of things is the result of the free will of the Deity. This intellectual state was that of Jesus during all his life. But in his great soul such a belief produced effects altogether opposed to those produced on men of vulgar mind. In the latter, belief in the special intervention of God caused a foolish credulity and the deceptions of charlatans. In his case it led to a profound conception of the close relations of man with God, and to an exaggerated belief in the power of man—beautiful delusions, which were the secret of his strength; for, if they were one day to be the means of laying him open to the criticism of the physicist and the chemist, they gave him an influence over his own age such as no individual before his time had, or since has, possessed.

His distinctive character showed itself while he was still very young. Legend delights to reveal him, even in his childhood, in revolt against paternal authority, and forsaking the commonplace ways of life to fulfil his mission.<sup>49</sup> It is at least certain that relations of kinship were of little account to him. His family do not seem to have loved him<sup>50</sup> and at times he appears to have been harsh towards them. Jesus, like all men exclusively possessed by one idea, came to think lightly of the ties of blood. The bond of thought is the only one recognised by natures such as his. "Behold my mother and my brethren!" he said, stretching forth his hand towards his disciples; "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother."<sup>51</sup> The simple people did not understand his meaning thus, and one day a woman passing near him cried out, "Blessed is the womb

<sup>49</sup> Luke 2: 42-50. The apocryphal Gospels are full of similar tales, carried to the grotesque.

<sup>50</sup> Matt. 13: 57; Mark 6: 4; John 7: 3-5. See p. 113, note 295.

<sup>51</sup> Matt. 12: 48; Mark 3: 33; Luke 8: 21; John 2: 4; Gospel of Hebrews, in Jerome, *Dial. adv. Pelag.* 3: 2.

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that bare thee, and the breasts which thou didst suck." But he said, "Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it" (Luke 11: 27, 28). Soon, in his bold revolt against nature, he was to go still further; and we shall see him trampling under foot all that is human—ties of blood, love, and country, keeping soul and heart only for the idea which presented itself to him as the absolute form of righteousness and truth.

## CHAPTER IV

### *The Mental Development of Jesus*

As the earth in its cooled state no longer permits us to understand the phenomena of primitive creation, because the fire which transfused it is extinct, so there is always a certain insufficiency in historical explanations, when our timid methods of investigation are applied to the revolutions of the epochs of creation which have decided the fate of humanity. Jesus lived at one of those periods when the game of public life is freely played, and when the stake of human activity is increased a hundredfold. Every great rôle then entails death; for such movements imply liberty and an absence of preventive measures, which cannot exist without terrible alternatives. In days such as our own, man risks little and gains little. In heroic periods of human activity, man risks all and gains all. The good and the wicked, or at least those who believe themselves and are believed to be such, form opposing armies. The apotheosis is reached by the scaffold; characters have distinctive features, which engrave them as eternal types in the memory of men. Apart from the French revolution, no historical environment was so suitable as that in which Jesus was formed, to develop those hidden forces held by mankind, as it were in reserve, which are only visible in days of fevered excitement and peril.

If the government of the world were a speculative problem, and the greatest philosopher were the man best fitted to tell his fellows what they ought to believe, it would be from quietude and reflection that those great moral and dogmatic truths called religions would proceed. But it is

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not so. Sakyamuni excepted, great religious founders have not been metaphysicians. Buddhism itself, which had its origin indeed in pure thought, conquered one half of Asia for motives that were wholly political and moral. As to the Semitic religions, they are as little philosophical as they well can be. Moses and Mahomet were not men of speculative tendencies; they were men of action. It was by proposing action to their fellow-countrymen and their contemporaries that they governed mankind. In like manner Jesus was not a theologian or a philosopher, with a more or less well constructed system. To be a disciple of Jesus it was not necessary to sign any formulary, or to profess any confession of faith; one thing alone was needful—to be attached to him, to love him. He never argued about God, for he felt him directly in himself. The rock of metaphysical subtleties against which Christianity broke from the third century onwards, was in nowise created by the founder. Jesus had neither dogma nor system, but a fixed personal resolution, which, exceeding in intensity every other created will, governs to this hour the destinies of humanity.

The Jewish people from the Babylonian captivity up to the Middle Ages had the advantage of being in a state of high tension. That is why the interpreters of the spirit of the nation, during that long period, seemed to write under the influence of a burning fever, which placed them constantly either above or below reason, rarely in its *via media*. Never did man seize the problem of the future and of his destiny with a more desperate courage, a greater determination to realise his possibilities to the utmost. Implicating the fate of mankind with that of their own little race, Jewish thinkers were the first to seek for a general theory of the progress of our species. Greece, always confined within its own bounds, and solely attentive to the petty

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quarrels of its rival cities, had admirable historians; but before the Roman epoch it would be vain to seek in classical literature for a general system of historical philosophy embracing all humanity. The Jew, on the other hand, thanks to a kind of prophetic sense which renders the Semite at times marvellously fitted to behold the great lines of the future, has made history enter into religion. Perhaps he owes a little of this spirit to Persia. Persia, from an ancient period, conceived of the history of the world as a series of evolutions, over each of which has presided a prophet. Each prophet has had his *hazar*, or reign of a thousand years (chiliasm), and of these successive ages, analogous to the millions of ages unrolled with each Buddha in India, is formed the course of events which prepare for the reign of Ormuzd. At the end of time, when the cycle of chiliasms shall be exhausted, the final paradise will come. Then men will live happy; the earth will be as one plain; there will be only one language, one law, and one government for all. But this future state will be preceded by terrible calamities. Dahak (the Persian Satan) will break his chains and fall upon the world. Two prophets will come to console mankind and to prepare for the great advent.<sup>52</sup>

These ideas ran through the world, and even reached Rome, where they inspired a cycle of prophetic poems, the fundamental ideas of which were the division of the history of mankind into periods, the succession of the gods corresponding to these periods, a complete renewal of the world, and the final advent of a golden age.<sup>53</sup> The book of Daniel and certain parts of the book of Enoch and of the Sibylline

<sup>52</sup> *Yacna*, 12: 24. Theopompus in Plutarch, *Of Isis and Osiris*, § 47. *Minokhired*, passage published in the *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 1: 163.

<sup>53</sup> Virgil, *Ecl.* 4: 4, with the commentary of Servius. Nogidius, cited by Servius on verse 10.



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books<sup>54</sup> form the Jewish expression of the same theory. It certainly cannot be maintained that these ideas were held by all. At first they were embraced only by a few men of lively imagination, who felt an inclination towards Gentile doctrines. The dry and narrow-minded author of the book of Esther never thought of the rest of the world, except to despise it and wish it evil.<sup>55</sup> The disillusioned Epicurean who wrote Ecclesiastes thought so little of the future that he even considered it useless to labour for one's children; in the eyes of this egoistical celibate, the highest wisdom is to exhaust one's fortune in one's own enjoyment.<sup>56</sup> But the great achievements of a people are generally due to the minority. Notwithstanding all their immense faults of character, hard, egoistical, scoffing, cruel, narrow, subtle, and sophistical as they were, the Jewish people were the authors of the finest movement of disinterested enthusiasm recorded in history. Opposition always makes for the glory of a country. The greatest men of the nation are often those whom it puts to death. Socrates was the glory of the Athenians, who would not suffer him to live amongst them. Spinoza was the greatest of modern Jews, and the synagogue expelled him with ignominy. Jesus was the glory of the people of Israel, who crucified him.

A mighty dream haunted the Jewish people for centuries, constantly renewing its youth in its decrepitude. Foreign to the theory of individual recompense, which Greece diffused under the name of the immortality of the soul, Judæa concentrated on her future as a nation all her power of love and longing. She believed that she possessed divine promises of a boundless future; and as the bitter reality,

<sup>54</sup> *Carm. Sibyll.* 3: 97-817.

<sup>55</sup> Esther 6: 13; 7: 10; 8: 7, 11-17; 9: 1-22. Comp. the apocryphal 9: 10, 11; 14: 13 *et seq.*; 16: 20-24.

<sup>56</sup> Eccl. 1: 11; 2: 16, 18-24; 3: 19-22; 4: 8, 15, 16; 5: 17, 18; 6: 3, 6; 8: 15; 9: 9, 10.

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from the ninth century before our era, gave the dominion of the world more and more to mere strength, and brutally crushed these aspirations, she took her stand in the union of the most impossible ideas, and attempted the most extraordinary gyrations. Before the captivity, when the whole earthly future of the nation had vanished, owing to the separation of the northern tribes, men dreamed of the restoration of the house of David, the reconciliation of the two divisions of the people, and the triumph of theocracy and the worship of Jehovah over idolatrous religions. At the epoch of the captivity, a poet, full of harmony, beheld the splendour of a future Jerusalem, to which the peoples and the distant isles should bow down, in colours so enchanting that one might say a ray of light from the eyes of Jesus had come to him from a distance of six centuries.<sup>57</sup>

The victory of Cyrus at one time seemed to realise these aspirations. The grave disciples of the Avesta and the worshippers of Jehovah believed themselves brothers. Persia had succeeded, by banishing the complex *devas* and transforming them into demons (*divs*), in drawing from the old Aryan imaginations, which were essentially naturalistic, a species of monotheism. The prophetic tone of many of the teachings of Iran had much analogy with certain compositions of Hosea and Isaiah. Israel was at rest under the successors of Cyrus,<sup>58</sup> and under Xerxes (Ahasuerus) made herself feared by the Iranians themselves. But the triumphant and often cruel entrance of Greek and Roman civilisation into Asia cast her back upon her dreams. More than ever she invoked the Messiah as judge and avenger of

<sup>57</sup> See the last six chapters of Isaiah.

<sup>58</sup> The Achæmenidæ. The whole Book of Esther breathes a strong attachment to this dynasty. Ecclesiastes, which seems to have been written at nearly the same time, shows great relaxation of Jewish thought.

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the peoples. A complete regeneration, a revolution shaking the whole world to its very foundation, was necessary to satisfy the mighty thirst for vengeance excited in her by the sense of her superiority, and by the sight of her humiliation.<sup>59</sup>

Had Israel possessed the so-called spiritual doctrine which divides man into two parts—the body and the soul—and finds it quite natural that, while the body decays, the soul should survive, this paroxysm of rage and of energetic protest would have had no reason to exist. But such a doctrine, a product of Greek philosophy, did not accord with the traditions of the Jewish mind. The ancient Hebrew writings contain no trace of future rewards or punishments. Whilst the idea of tribal solidarity existed, it was natural that a strict retribution according to individual merits should not be imagined. So much the worse for the pious man who happened to live at an epoch of impiety; like the others, he suffered the public misfortunes consequent on the general irreligion. This doctrine, bequeathed by the sages of the patriarchal era, constantly resulted in unsustainable contradictions. Already at the time of Job it was much shaken; the old men of Teman who professed it were behind the age, and the young Elihu, who intervened in order to combat them, dared to utter as his first word the essentially revolutionary sentiment, “It is not the great that are wise, nor the aged that understand judgment” (Job 32: 9). With the complications which had taken place in the world since the time of Alexander, the old Temanite and Mosaic principle had grown still more intolerable.<sup>60</sup> Never had Israel been more faithful to the Law, and yet she

<sup>59</sup> Apocr. Epistle of Baruch, in Fabricius (*Cod. pseud. V. T.* 2: 47) and Ceriani (*Monum. sacra et profana*, 1, 1: 96).

<sup>60</sup> It is, however, remarkable that the son of Sirach holds strictly to this view (Ecclesiasticus 17: 26–28; 22: 10, 11; 30: 4; 41: 1, 2; 44: 9). The author of the book of Wisdom is of quite a different opinion.

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had been subjected to the atrocious persecution of Antiochus. Only a rhetorician, accustomed to repeat old phrases grown meaningless, could dare to assert that these evils proceeded from the unfaithfulness of the people.<sup>61</sup> What! those victims who died for their faith, those heroic Maccabees, that mother with her seven sons—will Jehovah forget them eternally, abandon them to the corruption of the grave? (2 Macc. 7.) Possibly a worldly and incredulous Sadducee might not recoil before such a deduction, and a consummate sage, like Antigonus of Soco,<sup>62</sup> might well maintain that we must not practice virtue like slaves expecting a recompense, that we must be virtuous without hope. But the mass of the people could not be contented with this. Some, adopting the principle of philosophical immortality, imagined the righteous living in the memory of God, glorious for ever in the remembrance of men, and judging the wicked who had persecuted them.<sup>63</sup> “They live in the sight of God . . . they are known of God” (Wisdom 4: 1). That was their reward. Others, especially the Pharisees, had recourse to the doctrine of the resurrection.<sup>64</sup> The righteous will live again to participate in the Messianic kingdom. They will live again in the flesh, confronting a world of which they will be kings and judges; they will behold the triumph of their ideas and the humiliation of their foes.

<sup>61</sup> Esther (apocr.) 14: 6, 7. Apocryphal epistle of Baruch (Fabricius and Ceriani as above).

<sup>62</sup> *Pirké Aboth*, 1: 3.

<sup>63</sup> Wisdom of Solomon 2-6, 8: 13; *Pirké Aboth*, 4: 16; *De rationis imperio* (ascribed to Josephus), 8, 13, 16, 18. It is further to be noticed that the author of this latter treatise puts personal reward only in the second rank as motive. The mainspring of the martyr's devotion is pure love of the Law, the benefit of his death to the people, and the glory that will attach to his name (Wisdom 4: 1 *et seq.* Eccles. 44 *et seq.* Josephus, *Wars*, 2, 8: 10; 3, 8: 5).

<sup>64</sup> 2 Macc. 7: 9, 14; 12: 43, 44.

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Among the ancient people of Israel only very slight traces of this fundamental dogma are to be found. The Sadducee, who had no faith in it, was in reality true to the old Jewish doctrine; it was the Pharisee, the believer in the resurrection, who was the innovator. But in religion it is always the zealous party that innovates, that progresses and has influence. And indeed, the resurrection, an idea totally different from that of the immortality of the soul, emerged very naturally from the ancient doctrines and from the position of the people. Perhaps Persia also furnished some of its elements.<sup>65</sup> At any rate, in combination with the belief in the Messiah, and the doctrine of an approaching renewal of all things, the dogma of the resurrection formed the basis of those apocalyptic theories which, without being articles of faith (the orthodox Sanhedrim of Jerusalem does not appear to have adopted them), pervaded all imaginations, and produced a great fermentation from one end of the Jewish world to the other. The total absence of dogmatic rigour made it possible for very contradictory views to be simultaneously admitted even upon so important a point. Sometimes the righteous man was to await the resurrection; sometimes he was to be received at the moment of death into Abraham's bosom; sometimes the resurrection was to be general; sometimes it was to be reserved for the faithful alone; sometimes it supposed a regenerated world and a new Jerusalem; sometimes it implied a previous annihilation of the universe.

Jesus, as soon as he had any thought of his own, entered into the burning atmosphere which was created in Palestine by the ideas we have just described. These ideas were taught in no school; but they were in the air, and the soul of the young reformer was soon filled with them. Hesita-

<sup>65</sup> Theopompus in Diog. Laert. præm. 9; Boundchesch, 31. Traces of the doctrine of resurrection in the Avesta are very doubtful.

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tions and doubts, such as we have, never reached him. On the summit of the mountain of Nazareth, where no man can sit to-day without an uneasy, though it may be frivolous, feeling concerning his destiny, Jesus must often have sat unassailed by a single doubt. Unenthralled of selfishness—that source of our troubles which makes us seek with eagerness a reward for virtue beyond the tomb—he thought only of his work, of his race, and of mankind. The mountains, the sea, the blue sky, the lofty plains on the horizon, were for him, not the melancholy vision of a soul that asks of nature the knowledge of its destiny, but the certain symbol, the transparent shadow, of a world invisible and a new heaven.

Jesus never attached much importance to the political events of his time, and probably was little acquainted with them. The court of the Herods was a world so different from his own that he doubtless knew it only by name. Herod the Great died about the year in which Jesus was born, leaving enduring memories, and monuments which must compel posterity, however malevolent it may be, to couple his name with that of Solomon; yet nevertheless his was an incomplete work that could not be continued. The astute Idumean, an ambitious man of secular instincts who found himself lost in a maze of religious controversies, had the advantage which coolness and judgment, untrammelled by morality, give over passionate fanatics. But his idea of a temporal kingdom of Israel, even if it had not been an anachronism, considering the state of the world at the time at which it was conceived, would have miscarried, like the similar scheme devised by Solomon, owing to difficulties due to the character of the nation. His three sons were only satraps of Rome, like the rajahs of India under English rule. Antipater, or Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Peræa, of whom Jesus was a subject all his life, was an



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idle and weak prince, a favourite and flatterer of Tiberius, and too often led away by the bad influence of his second wife, Herodias.<sup>66</sup> Philip, tetrarch of Gaulonitis and Batanea, into whose territories Jesus made frequent journeys, was a much better sovereign.<sup>67</sup> As to Archelaus, ethnarch of Jerusalem, he could not have been known by Jesus, who was about ten years old when this man, who was feeble and without character, though sometimes violent, was dethroned by Augustus.<sup>68</sup> The last trace of autonomy was thus lost to Jerusalem. United to Samaria and Idumea, Judæa formed a kind of dependency of the province of Syria, in which the senator, Publius Sulpicius Quirinius,<sup>69</sup> a well-known consul, was the imperial legate. A series of Roman procurators, subordinate in important matters to the imperial legate of Syria—Coponius, Marcus Ambivius, Annius Rufus, Valerius Gratus, and lastly (in the twenty-sixth year of our era) Pontius Pilate—followed one another,<sup>70</sup> and were constantly employed in extinguishing the volcano in eruption beneath their feet.

As a matter of fact, continual seditions, fomented by the zealots of Mosaism, did not cease to agitate Jerusalem during the whole of this period.<sup>71</sup> Death for the seditious was inevitable; but death, when the integrity of the Law was in question, was sought with eagerness. To overthrow the Roman eagle, to destroy the works of art raised by the Herods—in which the Mosaic regulations were not always

<sup>66</sup> Luke 3: 19. Josephus, *Antiq.* 18, 5: 1; 7: 1, 2.

<sup>67</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.* 18, 4: 6.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 17, 13: 2; *Wars*, 2, 7: 3.

<sup>69</sup> Orelli, *Inscr. Lat.* 3693. Henzen, *Suppl.* 7041. *Fasti Prænest.*, March 6, April 28 (*Corpus inscr. Lat.* 1: 314, 317). Borghesi, *Fast. consul.* (unedited), A.U. 742. Mommsen, *Res gestæ divi Augusti*, 111. Tacitus, *Ann.* 2: 30; 3: 48. Strabo, 12, 6: 5.

<sup>70</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, the whole of books 17 and 18; *Wars*, 1 and 2.

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respected<sup>72</sup>—to rise in revolt against the votive escutcheons set up by the procurators, the inscriptions upon which seemed tainted with idolatry,<sup>73</sup>—these were perpetual temptations to fanatics, who had reached the degree of exaltation that deprives men of every care for life. Judas, son of Sariphea, and Matthias, son of Margaloth, two very famous doctors of the Law, formed against the established order of things a boldly aggressive party, which continued to exist after their execution.<sup>74</sup> The Samaritans were agitated by movements of the same character.<sup>75</sup> It seemed as though the Law had never counted a greater number of impassioned votaries than at this time, when he was already alive who, by the full authority of his genius and by the grandeur of his soul, was about to annul it. The “Zelotes” (*Kenaïm*), or “Sicarii,” pious assassins who took upon themselves the duty of slaying every one who, in their estimation, broke the Law, began to appear.<sup>76</sup> Representatives of a totally different spirit, the miracle-mongers (*Thaumaturgi*), who had the reputation of possessing divinity, found believers as a consequence of the imperious craving for the supernatural and the divine which was felt by the age.<sup>77</sup>

A movement which had much more influence upon Jesus was that of Judas the Gaulonite, or Galilean. Of all the exactions to which the country lately conquered by Rome was subjected, the census was the most unpopular. This measure, which always astonishes people little accustomed to the requirements of great central administrations, was

<sup>72</sup> Id. *Antiquities*, 15, 10: 4; *Wars*, 1, 33: 2, 3. Compare the Book of Enoch 97: 13, 14.

<sup>73</sup> Philo, *Leg. ad Caium*, 38.

<sup>74</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, 17, 6: 2; *Wars*, 1, 33: 3 *et seq.*

<sup>75</sup> Id. *Antiq.*, 18, 4: 1, 2.

<sup>76</sup> Mishna, *Sanhedrin*, 9: 6. John 16: 2. Josephus, *Wars*, 4, 5; 7, 8: 1.

<sup>77</sup> As Simon Magus, see Acts 8: 9–11.

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particularly objectionable to the Jews.<sup>78</sup> Already, under David, we know that a numbering of the people had provoked violent recriminations and the menaces of the prophets (2 Sam. 24). The census, in fact, was the basis of taxation; and taxation, according to the ideas of pure theocracy, was almost an impiety. God being the sole master whom man ought to recognise, to pay tithe to a secular sovereign was, in a measure, to put him in the place of God. Completely foreign to the idea of the state, Jewish theocracy in this matter only acted up to its logical induction—the negation of civil society and of all government. The money in the public treasury was considered stolen money.<sup>79</sup> The census ordered by Quirinius (in the year 6 of the Christian era) led to a strong revival of these ideas and caused a great upheaval. A popular movement began in the northern provinces. Judas, a man belonging to the town of Gamala, upon the eastern shore of the Lake of Tiberias, and a Pharisee named Sadok, by denying the lawfulness of the tax, gathered round them a numerous party, which soon broke out into open revolt.<sup>80</sup> The fundamental maxims of this school were, that freedom was worth more than life, and that they ought to call no man “master”—that title belonging to God alone. Judas doubtless had many other principles, which Josephus, always careful not to compromise his co-religionists, designedly passes by in silence; for it is impossible to understand how, for so simple an idea, the Jewish historian should accord him a place among the philosophers of his nation, and regard him as the

<sup>78</sup> Discourse of Claudius at Lyons, tab. 2, s. f. De Boissieu, *Inscr. ant. de Lyon*, 136.

<sup>79</sup> Babylonian Talmud, *Baba kama*, 113 a; *Schabbath*, 33 b.

<sup>80</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18, 1: 1, 6; 20, 5: 2. *Wars*, 2, 8: 1; 7, 8: 1. Acts 5: 37. In the Acts we find another agitator, Theudas, before Judas the Gaulonite; but this is an anachronism; the movement of Theudas took place A.D. 44 (Josephus, *Antiq.* 20, 5: 1).

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founder of a fourth school on an equality with those of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. Judas was evidently the leader of a Galilean sect, filled with the Messianic idea, which finally became a political movement. The procurator Coponius crushed the Gaulonite's sedition, but the school survived and kept its chiefs. Under the leadership of Menahem, son of the founder, and of a certain Eleazar, his relative, we again find them very active in the last struggles of the Jews against the Romans.<sup>81</sup> It may be that Jesus saw this Judas, whose conception of the Jewish revolution differed so widely from his own; at any rate he knew his school, and it was probably by a reaction from his error that he pronounced his axiom upon the penny of Cæsar. Jesus, in his wisdom far removed from all sedition, profited by the fault of his predecessor, and dreamed of another kingdom and another deliverance.

Galilee was thus a vast furnace wherein the most diverse elements were seething together.<sup>82</sup> An extraordinary contempt for life, or, to be more accurate, a kind of appetite for death, was the result of these agitations.<sup>83</sup> Experience counts for nothing in great fanatical movements. Algeria, in the early years of the French occupation, saw inspired men, who declared themselves to be invulnerable and sent by God to sweep forth the infidels, arise with every spring; by the following year their death was forgotten, and their successors found no less credence. Though in some respects very stern, the Roman power was as yet but little inclined to be meddlesome, and permitted a good deal of liberty. Those great brutal despotisms, terrible though

<sup>81</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20, 5: 2; *Wars*, 2, 17: 8, 9; 7, 8: 6.

<sup>82</sup> Luke 13: 1. The Galilæan movement of Judas son of Hezekiah seems not to have had a religious aim; perhaps, however, this has been dissembled by Josephus (*Antiq.*, 17, 10: 5).

<sup>83</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, 17, 6: 2, 3; 18, 1: 1.

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they might be in repressing sedition, were not so suspicious as are powers, which have dogmatic faith to defend. They permitted every freedom until the day when they thought it necessary to act stringently. It is not recorded that Jesus was even once interfered with by the authorities during the whole of his wandering life. Liberty such as this, and, above all, the happiness which Galilee enjoyed in being much less fettered by the bonds of Pharisaic pedantry, gave that province a real superiority over Jerusalem. The revolution, or, in other words, the expectance of the Messiah, caused there a general activity of thought. Men deemed themselves on the eve of the great renewal of all things; the Scriptures, tortured into divers meanings, fostered the most colossal hopes. In every line of the simple writings of the Old Testament they beheld the assurance, and, in a manner, the programme of the future reign, which was to bring peace to the righteous and to consummate for ever the work of God.

From all time this division into two parties, opposed both in interest and spirit, had been a powerful principle in the moral development of the Hebrew nation. Every people called to high destinies must be of necessity a little world in itself, including opposite poles. In Greece, at a few leagues' distance from each other, were Sparta and Athens—to a superficial observer the two antipodes, but, in reality, rival sisters, each necessary to the other. It was the same with Judæa. In a sense less brilliant than the development of Jerusalem, that of the north was on the whole much more fertile; the highest achievements of the Jewish people have always proceeded thence. A complete absence of feeling for nature, bordering on harshness, narrowness, and ferocity, has stamped all purely Hierosolymite works with a certain grandeur, but it is a melancholy, sterile, and repellent grandeur. With its solemn doctors, its insipid

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canonists, its hypocritical and splenetic devotees, Jerusalem would not have conquered humanity. The north has given to the world the simple Shunamite, the humble Canaanite, the impassioned Magdalene, the good foster-father Joseph, and the Virgin Mary. It was the north alone that created Christianity; Jerusalem, on the other hand, was the true home of the stubborn Judaism which, founded by the Pharisees and fixed by the Talmud, has traversed the Middle Ages and come down to us.

A beautiful natural environment tended to produce the much less austere spirit—the less rigidly monotheistic spirit, if I may say so—which imprinted a charming and idyllic character on all the dreams of Galilee. The saddest country in the world is perhaps the region surrounding Jerusalem. Galilee, on the contrary, was a very green, shady, smiling land, the true home of the Song of Songs, and the Songs of the Well-beloved.<sup>84</sup> During the months of March and April, the country is a carpet of flowers of an incomparable variety of colours. The animals are small and extremely gentle—delicate and playful turtle-doves, black-birds so light that they rest on a blade of grass without bending it, tufted larks which almost venture under the feet of the traveller, little river tortoises with mild bright eyes, storks of gravely modest mien, which, casting aside all timidity, allow man to come quite near them, and seem indeed to invite his approach. In no country in the world

<sup>84</sup> The shocking condition to which the country is now reduced, especially near Lake Tiberias, should not deceive us. These regions, now blasted, were once an earthly paradise. The baths of Tiberias, which are now a dreadful abode, were once the loveliest spot in Galilee (Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18, 2: 3). Josephus (*Wars*, 3, 10: 8) boasts of the fine trees of the plain of Gennesareth, where there is now not one left. Antoninus, the martyr, about A.D. 600—fifty years before the Moslem invasion—still found Galilee covered with delightful plantations, and compares its fruitfulness with that of Egypt (*Itin.* 5). Compare Josephus, *Wars*, 3, 3: 2.



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do the mountains extend with more harmonious outlines or inspire higher thoughts. Jesus seems to have had an especial love for them. The most important events of his divine career took place upon the mountains. It was there that he was best inspired;<sup>85</sup> it was there that he had mystic communion with the ancient prophets; and it was there that his transfiguration was revealed to the eyes of his disciples.<sup>86</sup>

This beautiful country now, owing to the impoverishment brought by Turkish Islamism into human life, a land of heart-rending gloom, yet nevertheless, in all that man cannot destroy, breathing an air of freedom and mildness and tenderness, was filled at the time of Jesus with prosperity and gaiety. The Galileans had the reputation of being energetic, brave, and industrious.<sup>87</sup> If we except Tiberias, built in the Roman style by Antipas in honour of Tiberius (about the year 15),<sup>88</sup> Galilee had no large towns. The country was nevertheless very populous, covered with small towns and large villages, and skilfully cultivated in all its parts.<sup>89</sup> From the ruins that remain of its former glories, we can imagine an agricultural people, by no means gifted in art, caring little for luxury, indifferent to the beauties of form, and exclusively idealistic. The country abounded in running streams and in fruits; the large farms were shaded with vines and fig-trees; the gardens were full of apple, walnut, and pomegranate trees.<sup>90</sup> The wine was excellent, if we may judge by that which the Jews still make at Safed,

<sup>85</sup> Matt. 5: 1; 14: 23. Luke 6: 12.

<sup>86</sup> Matt. 17: 1-8; Mark 9: 1-8; Luke 9: 28-36.

<sup>87</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 3, 3: 2.

<sup>88</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18, 2: 2; *Wars*, 2, 9: 1; *Life*, 12, 13, 64.

<sup>89</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 3, 3: 2.

<sup>90</sup> We may fancy them from several enclosures near Nazareth (cf. Cant., 2: 3, 5, 13; 4: 13; 6: 6, 10; 7: 8, 12; 8: 2, 5; Antoninus the martyr, as above). The aspect of the great farms is still well preserved in the southerly region of Tyre (old tribe of Asher). Traces of the ancient

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and the people drank much of it.<sup>91</sup> This contented life of easy satisfaction had no resemblance to the gross materialism of our own peasantry, the coarse enjoyments of agricultural Normandy, or the heavy mirth of the Flemish. It was spiritualised in ethereal dreams by a kind of poetic mysticism, in which heaven and earth were made one. Leave the austere Baptist in his Judæan desert to preach repentance with unceasing invective, and to live on locusts in the company of jackals! Why should the guests of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? Joy will be a part of the kingdom of God. Is she not the daughter of the humble in heart, of men of good will?

The whole history of nascent Christianity has in this way become a delightful pastoral. A Messiah at the marriage feast—the courtesan and the good Zaccheus bidden to his festivals—the founders of the kingdom of heaven like a bridal procession,—that is what Galilee has dared to offer, and to make the world accept. Greece has drawn admirable pictures of human life in sculpture and in poetry, but they are ever without receding backgrounds and distant horizons. In Galilee were wanting the marble, the skilled craftsman, the exquisite and refined language. But Galilee has created the sublimest ideal for the popular imagination; since behind its idyll the destiny of humanity is being decided, and the light which illumines its pictures is the sun of the kingdom of God.

Jesus lived and grew up in these beautiful surroundings. From his childhood he went nearly every year to the feast at Jerusalem (Luke 2: 41). This pilgrimage had a sweet solemnity for provincial Jews. Whole series of

agriculture of Palestine, with its threshing-floors, press-rooms, silos, stalls, mills, etc., cut in the rock, appear at every step.

<sup>91</sup> Matt. 9: 17; 11: 19. Mark 2: 22. Luke 5: 37; 7: 34. John 2: 3-10.

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psalms were consecrated to celebrating the happiness of thus journeying in family companionship during several Spring days by hill and dale, every pilgrim eager to behold the splendours of Jerusalem, the dread solemnities of the sacred courts, and to know the joy of brethren dwelling together in unity.<sup>92</sup> The route which Jesus ordinarily took in these journeys was that which is followed to this day through Ginæa and Shechem.<sup>93</sup> From Shechem to Jerusalem the journey is exhausting. But the neighbourhood of the old sanctuaries of Shiloh and Bethel, near which the pilgrims pass, keeps their interest alive. Ain-el-Haramie, the last halting-place,<sup>94</sup> is a spot which possesses a melancholy charm; and there are few impressions which can equal that experienced on encamping there for the night. The valley is narrow and sombre, and a dark stream issues from the crags, full of tombs hewn out of the solid rock, which hem it in. It is, I think, the "valley of weeping," or of dropping waters, described as one of the resting-places by the way in the delightful eighty-fourth Psalm, and forming an emblem of life for the sad sweet mysticism of the Middle Ages. Early the next day the pilgrims would be at Jerusalem; that expectation even now sustains the caravan with hope, making the night short and slumber light.

These pilgrimages, in which the re-united nation exchanged its ideas, were almost always centres of great agitation in thought; and they placed Jesus in contact with the very soul of his people, probably inspiring him whilst still young with a strong antipathy to the failings of the official

<sup>92</sup> See especially Psalms 84, 122, 133.

<sup>93</sup> Luke 9: 51-53; 22: 11. John 4: 4. Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20, 6:1; *Wars*, 2, 12: 3; *Life*, 52. Pilgrims, however, often went by way of Peræa to avoid Samaria, where they might be in danger (Matt. 19: 1; Mark 10: 1).

<sup>94</sup> According to Josephus (*Life*, 52) it was a three days' journey. But the stage from Shechem to Jerusalem must often have been divided.

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representatives of Judaism. It is believed that very early in life the wilderness also had some influence on his development, and that he made long sojourns there. But the God he found in the wilderness was not his God. It was rather the God of Job, stern and terrible, accountable to no man. Sometimes Satan came to tempt him. Then he returned into his beloved Galilee, and once more found his heavenly Father in the midst of green hills and clear fountains—among the women and children, who, with joyous soul and with the song of the angels in their hearts, awaited the salvation of Israel.

## CHAPTER V

### *The First Teachings of Jesus*

Joseph died before his son had taken any part in public affairs. Thus Mary remained the head of the family, and this explains why her son, when it was necessary to distinguish him from many others of the same name, was most frequently called the "son of Mary."<sup>95</sup> It seems that, having, by the death of her husband, been left friendless at Nazareth, she withdrew to Cana,<sup>96</sup> whence originally she may have come. Cana<sup>97</sup> was a small town situated at a distance of from two to two and a half hours' journey from Nazareth, at the foot of the mountains which form the northern boundary of the plain of Asochis. The prospect, less imposing than at Nazareth, extends over the whole plain, and is bounded in a most picturesque manner by the mountains of Nazareth and the hills of Sepphoris.

Jesus seems to have lived for some time in this place. Here he probably spent a part of his youth, and it was here that his greatness first revealed itself.<sup>98</sup> He followed

<sup>95</sup> This is the expression of Mark 6: 3 (cf. Matt, 13: 55). Mark does not speak of Joseph; the fourth Gospel and Luke, on the other hand, prefer the expression "son of Joseph" (Luke 3: 23; 4: 22. John 1: 45; 6: 42). It is singular that the fourth Gospel never calls the mother of Jesus by her name. The name "Ben-Joseph" in the Talmud, indicating one of the Messiahs, is suggestive.

<sup>96</sup> John 2: 1; 4: 46. John is the only writer who seems informed on this point.

<sup>97</sup> Now Kana-el Djelil, the same with Cana Galilé of the times of the Crusades (see *Archives des missions scientifiques*, ser. 2, vol. 3, p. 370). Kefr Kenna, an hour or hour and a half north-northeast from Nazareth (Capharchemmé of the Crusades) is distinct from this.

<sup>98</sup> John 2: 11; 4: 46. One or two of his disciples were from Cana (John 21: 2; Matt. 10: 4; Mark 3: 18).

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the trade of his father, which was that of a carpenter.<sup>99</sup> In this there is nothing humiliating or irksome. The Jewish custom required that a man devoted to intellectual work should learn a handicraft. The most celebrated doctors had their trades;<sup>100</sup> thus St. Paul, who was so carefully educated, was a tent-maker (Acts 18: 3). Jesus never married. His whole capacity for love was concentrated upon that which he felt was his heavenly vocation. The extremely delicate feeling towards women which we remark in him was not inconsistent with the exclusive devotion which he had for his ideal.<sup>101</sup> Like Francis of Assisi and Francis of Sales, he treated as sisters the women who devoted themselves to the same work as himself; he had his St. Clare, his Frances of Chantal. But it is probable that they loved him more than they loved the work; he was, no doubt, more beloved than loving. Thus, as often happens in very lofty natures, tenderness of heart was in him transformed into an infinite sweetness, a vague poetry, a universal charm. His relations, free and intimate but of an entirely moral kind, with women of dubious character, are also to be explained by the passion which attached him to the glory of his Father, and made him jealously anxious for all beautiful creatures who could contribute to it.<sup>102</sup>

Through what stages did the ideas of Jesus progress during this obscure period of his life? By what meditations did he enter upon his career as a prophet? On these points we are ignorant, his history having reached us in scattered narratives lacking in chronological exactness. But the development of living personality is everywhere the same; and there can be no doubt that the growth of a char-

<sup>99</sup> Matt. 13: 55; Mark 6: 3; Justin, *Tryph.* 88.

<sup>100</sup> For example, R. Johanan the shoemaker; R. Isaac the blacksmith.

<sup>101</sup> See chap. 9, below.

<sup>102</sup> Luke 7: 37-50. John 4: 7-27; 8: 3-11.



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acter so powerful as that of Jesus obeyed very rigorous laws. A high conception of Divinity, not derived from Judaism, but apparently the creation of his own great mind, was, in some measure, the guiding principle to which his power was due. It is here most essential that we should put aside the ideas familiar to us, and the discussions in which petty intellects exhaust themselves. Properly to understand the precise character of the piety of Jesus, we must forget all that has come between the Gospel and ourselves. Deism and pantheism have become the two poles of theology. The paltry discussions of scholasticism, the intellectual aridity of Descartes, the deep-rooted irreligion of the eighteenth century, by lessening God, and, in a manner, limiting him by the exclusion of all that is not his very self, have stifled all fertile ideas of the divine in the breast of modern rationalism. If God, in fact, be a personal being external to us, he who believes himself to have peculiar relations with God is a "visionary"; and since the physical and physiological sciences have shown us that all supernatural visions are illusions, the logical deist finds it impossible to understand the great beliefs of ages past. Pantheism, on the other hand, by its suppression of the divine personality, is as far as it can be from the living God of the ancient religions. Were the men who comprehended God best—Sakyamuni, Plato, St. Paul, St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Augustine (at some periods of his fluctuating life)—deists or pantheists? Such a question is meaningless. Physical and metaphysical proofs of the existence of God would have been quite indifferent to these great men. They felt the divine within themselves.

Jesus must be placed in the front rank of this great family of the true sons of God. Jesus had no visions; God did not speak to him as to one outside of himself; God was in him; he felt himself with God, and from his own heart

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he drew all that he said of his Father. He dwelt in the bosom of God by constant communion with him; he beheld him not, but he understood him, without having need of the thunder and the burning bush of Moses, of the revealing tempest of Job, of the oracle of the old Greek sages, of the familiar spirit of Socrates, or of the angel Gabriel of Mahomet. Here we find nothing resembling the imagination and the hallucination of a St. Theresa. The frenzy of the Sufi proclaiming himself one with God is also quite another thing. Jesus never once gave utterance to the sacrilegious idea that he was God. He believed himself to have direct communion with God; he believed himself to be the Son of God. The highest consciousness of God which has ever existed in the heart of man was that of Jesus.

On the other hand, we understand how Jesus, having such a spiritual standpoint at the outset, could never have been a speculative philosopher like Sakyamuni. Nothing is farther from scholastic theology than the Gospel.<sup>103</sup> The speculations of the Greek fathers on the divine essence proceed from an entirely different spirit. God, conceived simply as Father,—such was the whole theology of Jesus. And this was not with him a theoretical principle, a doctrine more or less proved, which he sought to inculcate in others. He did not argue with his disciples;<sup>104</sup> he exacted from them no effort of attention. He did not preach his opinions; he preached himself. Very great and highly disinterested minds often present, associated with much loftiness, those characteristics of perpetual attention to themselves and extreme personal susceptibility which, in general, are

<sup>103</sup> The discourses which the fourth Gospel puts into the mouth of Jesus contain the germ of such a theology; but, since they utterly contradict those of the Synoptics, which doubtless represent the primitive *Logia*, they must be taken as documents of apostolic history, not as incidents in his life.

<sup>104</sup> See Matt. 9: 9, and other similar accounts.

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peculiar to women.<sup>105</sup> Their conviction that God is in them and perpetually occupies himself with them, is so strong that they have no dread of imposing themselves upon others; our reserve, and our respect for the opinion of others, which is a part of our weakness, could not belong to them. This exaltation of personality is not egoism; for such men, possessed by their idea, gladly give their lives to consummate their work; it is the identification of self with the object it has embraced, carried to its farthest point. It is considered vainglory by those who see in the new doctrine only the personal fantasy of the founder; but it is the finger of God to those who see the result. Here the fool stands side by side with the inspired man; only the fool never succeeds. It has not yet been given to insanity to influence human progress seriously.

It can hardly be doubted that Jesus did not attain at first to this high affirmation of himself. But it is probable that, from the first, he looked upon his relationship with God as that of a son with his father. Herein was his great originality; in this he had nothing in common with his race.<sup>106</sup> Neither Jew nor Mussulman has understood this sweet theology of love. The God of Jesus is not that relentless master who kills us, or damns us, or saves us according to his good pleasure. The God of Jesus is our Father. We hear him when we listen to the gentle voice that breathes within us, "Abba, Father." The God of Jesus is not the unjust despot who has chosen Israel for his people and specially protects them. He is the God of humanity. Jesus was not a patriot like the Maccabees, or a theocrat like Judas the Gaulonite. Rising fearlessly above the preju-

<sup>105</sup> See, for example, John 21: 15-17, noting that this trait seems to have been exaggerated in the fourth Gospel.

<sup>106</sup> The lofty soul of Philo comes in touch here, as at many other points with that of Jesus. *De confus. ling.*, 14; *De migr. Abrah.*, 1; *De somniis*, 2: 41; *De agric.*, Noë, 12; *De mutat. nominum*, 4.

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dices of his nation, he asserted the universal fatherhood of God. The Gaulonite maintained that a man should rather die than give to any other than God the name of "Master"; Jesus left the title to any one who cared to take it, and for God reserved a dearer name. Whilst he accorded the great ones of the earth, who to him were representatives of power, an ironical respect, he established the supreme consolation—recourse to the Father whom every man has in heaven—and the true kingdom of God, which every man bears in his heart.

The term "kingdom of God," or "kingdom of heaven,"<sup>107</sup> was the favourite expression of Jesus to describe the revolution which he inaugurated in the world.<sup>108</sup> Like almost all the Messianic terminology, it came from the book of Daniel. According to the author of that extraordinary work, the four profane empires, destined to ruin, were to be succeeded by a fifth empire which should be that of the saints, and last for ever.<sup>109</sup> This reign of God upon earth naturally lent itself to the most diverse interpretations. To many it was the reign of the Messiah or of a new David; to Jewish theology the "kingdom of God" is most frequently only Judaism itself—the true religion, the monotheistic worship, piety.<sup>110</sup> In the latter part of his life Jesus believed that this reign would be realised in

<sup>107</sup> The word "heaven," in the rabbinical language of that day, is a synonym of the name "God," which was commonly avoided. See Buxtorf, *Lex. Chald. Talm. Rabb.*, under the word שָׁמַיִם, and Daniel 4: 22, 23 (cf. Matt. 21: 25; Mark 11: 30, 31; Luke 15: 18, 21, and 20: 4, 5).

<sup>108</sup> This expression occurs constantly in the Synoptics, the Acts, and the Pauline epistles. That it appears only once in the fourth Gospel (3: 3, 5), is because the discourses here reported are far from representing the real speech of Jesus.

<sup>109</sup> Daniel 2: 44; 7: 13, 14, 22, 27. Apocal. of Baruch in Ceriani: *Monumenta sacra et profana*, 1: 82 (fasc. 2).

<sup>110</sup> Mishna *Berakoth*, 2: 1, 3. Jerusalem Talmud, *Berakoth*, 2: 2; *Kidduschin*, 1: 2. Babylonian Talmud, *Berakoth*, 15 a; *Mekilta*, 42 b; *Siphra*, 17 b. The expression often occurs in the *Midraschim*.

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a material form by a sudden regeneration of the world. But probably this was not his first idea.<sup>111</sup> The admirable moral conclusion which he draws from the idea of God as a Father, was not that of the enthusiasts who believed the world was near its end, and by asceticism prepared themselves for a chimerical catastrophe; it is that of a world of men who have lived, and still would live. "The kingdom of God is among you,"<sup>112</sup> said he to those that sought with subtilty for external signs. The realistic conception of the Divine advent was but a cloud, a transient error, which his death has made us forget. The Jesus who founded the true kingdom of God, the kingdom of the humble and meek, was the Jesus of early life<sup>113</sup>—of those chaste and simple days when the voice of his Father re-echoed within him in clearer tones. It was then, for some months, perhaps a year, that God truly dwelt upon earth. The voice of the young carpenter suddenly acquired a wonderful sweetness. An infinite charm was breathed forth from his person, and those who had seen him up to that time no longer recognised him.<sup>114</sup> As yet he had no disciples, and the group of men which gathered about him was neither a sect nor a school; but already they felt a common spirit, a sweet and permeating influence. His lovable character, accompanied doubtless by one of those exquisite faces<sup>115</sup> occasionally to be seen in the Jewish race, threw around him a circle of fascination

<sup>111</sup> Matt. 5: 10; 6: 10, 33; 11: 11; 12: 28; 18: 4; 19: 12. Mark 10: 14, 15; 12: 34. Luke 12: 31.

<sup>112</sup> The rendering "within you" is less accurate, though not remote from the thought of Jesus in this passage.

<sup>113</sup> The impressive theory of the revelation of the Son of Man first appears in the Synoptics just before the story of the Passion (Matt. 24: 30). The early discourses, especially in Matthew, are purely ethical.

<sup>114</sup> Matt. 13: 54-58; Mark 6: 2-6; John 6: 42.

<sup>115</sup> The tradition that in Jesus there was "no form or comeliness" [Is. 53: 2]—see Justin, *Tryph.* 85, 88, 100; Clem. Alex. *Pædag.* 3: 1; Strom. 6: 17; Orig. c. *Cels.* 6: 75; Tertull. *De carne Christi*, 9, adv. Jud.

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from which none in the midst of these kindly and simple people could escape.

Paradise, in fact, would have been brought down to earth, had not the ideas of the young Master far transcended the level of ordinary goodness, above which it has not yet been found possible to raise the human race. The brotherhood of men, as sons of God, and the normal consequences resulting from such a conception, were deduced with exquisite feeling. Like all the rabbis of the time, Jesus was little inclined towards dialectic reasoning, and put his doctrine into concise aphorisms, and into forms of expression which were at times enigmatical and strange.<sup>116</sup> Some of these aphorisms come from the books of the Old Testament. Others were the thoughts of more modern sages, especially of Antigonus of Soco, Jesus son of Sirach, and Hillel, which he learnt, not from learned study, but from their constant popular use as proverbs. The synagogue was rich in very happily expressed maxims which formed a kind of current proverbial literature.<sup>117</sup> Jesus adopted almost all this oral teaching, but imbued it with a higher spirit.<sup>118</sup> Usually exceeding the duties laid down by the Law and the prophets, he desired perfection. All the virtues of

14—arose from the wish to find realised in him an assumed Messianic trait. No traditional portrait of him existed in the earliest centuries (see Augustine, *De Trin.* 8: 4, 5; Irenæus, *Adv. hæer.* 1, 25: 6.).

<sup>116</sup> The Logia of Matthew bring together many of these maxims in the form of long discourses; but their fragmentary character is perceptible at the joinings.

<sup>117</sup> Sentences of the Jewish doctors of the time are collected in the little book called *Pirké Aboth*.

<sup>118</sup> Coincidences will be indicated from time to time, as they may occur. It has sometimes been thought that, as the Talmud was compiled later than the Gospels, the Jewish editors may have borrowed from the Christian ethics. But this is untenable; for the maxims of the Talmud which correspond to passages of the Gospels are fixed in date by the names of the doctors to whom they are ascribed, thus disproving the notion of such borrowings.



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humility—forgiveness, charity, abnegation, and self-denial—virtues which, with good reason, have been called Christian, if by that we mean that they were truly preached by Christ, existed in germ in this first teaching. As to justice, he was content with repeating the well-known axiom: “All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them.” But this old and somewhat selfish wisdom did not satisfy him.<sup>119</sup> He went to extremes, and said, “Whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.” “If thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee.” “Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you.” “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” “Condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned.” “Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful.” “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” “Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted.”<sup>120</sup>

Concerning alms, pity, good works, kindness, peacefulness, and complete unselfishness of heart, he had little to add to the doctrine of the synagogue.<sup>121</sup> But he placed

<sup>119</sup> Matt. 7: 12; Luke 6: 31. This maxim may be found in the Book of Tobit, 4: 16. Hillel constantly appealed to it (Babyl. Talm., *Schabbath*, 31 a), and declared, like Jesus, that it was a summary of the Law.

<sup>120</sup> Matt. 5: 39, 40; Luke 6: 29; cf. Lamentations 3: 30.—Matt. 5: 29, 30, and 18: 9; Mark 9: 46.—Matt. 5: 44; Luke 6: 37: cf. Babylonian Talmud, *Schabbath*, 88 b; *Joma*, 23 a.—Matt. 7: 1; Luke 6: 37: cf. Babyl. Talm. *Kethuboth*, 105 b.—Luke 6: 37; cf. Levit. 19: 18; Prov. 20: 22; Eccles. 18: 1-5.—Luke 6: 36; Siphre, 51 b (Sulzbach, 1802).—Repeated in Acts 20: 35.—Matt. 23: 12; Luke 14: 11, and 18: 14. Of like spirit are the sayings reported by Jerome from the “Gospel of the Hebrews” (*Comm. in Ephes.* 5: 4; Ezek. 18; *adv. Pelagium*, 3: 2): cf. Babyl. Talm. *Erubin*. 13 b.

<sup>121</sup> Deut. 24, 25, 26 *et seq.* Is. 58: 7; Prov. 19: 17; *Pirké Aboth*, 1; Jerusalem Talmud, *Péah*, 1: 4; Babylonian Talmud, *Schabbath*, 63 a, and *Baba kama*, 93 a.

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upon them an emphasis full of impressive grace which gave the old maxims new life. Morality is not a matter of more or less well-expressed principles. The poetry which makes the precept loved is more than the precept itself, regarded as an abstract truth. It cannot be denied that these maxims, borrowed by Jesus from his predecessors, produce quite a different effect in the Gospel from that in the ancient Law, in the *Pirké Aboth*, or in the Talmud. It is neither the ancient Law nor the Talmud which has conquered and transformed the world. Only slightly original in itself—if by that we mean that it might be reconstructed almost entirely by the aid of more ancient maxims—the morality of the Gospels remains nevertheless the highest creation of the human conscience, the most beautiful code of perfect life that any moralist has ever framed.

Jesus did not speak against the Mosaic law, but it is clear that he saw its insufficiency and let it be seen that he did so. He never ceased to repeat that more must be done than the ancient sages had commanded. He forbade the least harsh word; he prohibited divorce, and all oath-taking; he inveighed against revenge; he condemned usury; he considered sensual desire as criminal as adultery; he desired the universal forgiveness of injuries.<sup>122</sup> The motive on which he based these maxims of exalted charity was always the same—"That ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the

<sup>122</sup> Matt. 5: 22, 31, 32 (cf. Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 22 a), 33-37, 38-42 (less formally forbidden in Deut. 15: 7, 8, and allowed by custom, as in Luke 7: 41-43); 27: 28 (cf. Talmud, *Masseket Kalla*: ed. Furth, 1793, 34 b); 5: 23-26.

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Gentiles the same? Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”<sup>123</sup>

A pure worship, a religion without priests and external observances, resting wholly on the feelings of the heart, on the imitation of God,<sup>124</sup> on the close communion of the conscience with the heavenly Father, were the results of these principles. Jesus never shrank from this bold conclusion, which made him an indomitable revolutionary in the very heart of Judaism. Why should there be mediators between man and his Father? Since God only sees the heart, to what good end those purifications, those observances relating to the body alone?<sup>125</sup> Even tradition, a thing so sacred to the Jews, is nothing compared with pure feeling. The hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who, as they prayed, turned their heads to see if they were observed, who gave their alms with ostentation, and put marks upon their garments, that they might be recognised as pious men—all these affectations of false devotion roused his disgust. “They have their reward,” said he; “but when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thine alms may be in secret, and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall recompense thee.”<sup>126</sup> “And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber; and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father, which

<sup>123</sup> Matt. 5: 45–48; cf. Lev. 11: 44, and 19: 2; Ephes. 5: 1; and Plato’s *δμοίωσις τῷ θεῷ*.

<sup>124</sup> Comp. Philo, *De migr. Abrah.* 23, 24; *De vita contempl.*, throughout.

<sup>125</sup> Matt. 15: 11–20. Mark 7: 5–8.

<sup>126</sup> Matt. 6: 1–4 (cf. Eccles. 17: 18, and 29: 15; Babyl. Talm. *Chagiga*, 5 a, and *Baba bathra*, 9 b).

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seeth in secret, shall recompense thee. And in praying, use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not therefore like unto them, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him" (Matt. 6: 5-8).

He affected none of the external signs of asceticism, contenting himself with praying, or rather meditating, upon the mountains and in the lonely places, where man has always sought God.<sup>127</sup> This lofty idea of the relations of man with God, of which so few souls, even after him, have been capable, was summed up in a prayer which at that time he taught to his disciples:<sup>128</sup>

"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done as in heaven so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation; but deliver us from the evil one."<sup>129</sup> He especially insisted upon the idea that the heavenly Father knows better than we what is needful, and that we almost sin against him in asking him for this or that particular thing (Luke 11: 5-13).

In this Jesus only carried to their logical conclusion the great principles which Judaism had founded, but which the official classes of the nation tended more and more to despise. The Greek and Roman prayers were almost always mere egoistical verbiage. Never had pagan priest said to the faithful, "If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then

<sup>127</sup> Matt. 14: 23. Luke 4: 42; 5: 16; 6: 12.

<sup>128</sup> Matt. 6: 9-13; Luke 11: 2-4; cf. Babylonian Talmud, *Berakoth*, 29 b, 30 a, especially the expression אֲבִירֵי שְׁמַיִם.

<sup>129</sup> That is, the Evil Spirit. (See discussion in *Pirké Aboth.*; Cambridge (Eng.), Univ. Press, 1877, pp. 142-145.)

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come and offer thy gift " (Matt. 5: 23, 24). Alone in antiquity, the Jewish prophets, more especially Isaiah, had, in their hatred for priestcraft, caught a glimpse of the true nature of the worship which man owes to God. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. . . . Incense is an abomination unto me . . . your hands are full of blood . . . cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment."<sup>130</sup> In later times certain doctors, Simeon the Just,<sup>131</sup> Jesus son of Sirach,<sup>132</sup> and Hillel,<sup>133</sup> almost reached the final position and declared that the Law was, in brief, righteousness. Philo, in the Judæo-Egyptian world, attained, at the same time as Jesus, ideas of high moral sanctity, the consequence of which was indifference to the observances of the Law.<sup>134</sup> Shemaïa and Abtalion also proved themselves more than once to be very liberal casuists.<sup>135</sup> Rabbi Johanan ere long placed works of mercy above even the study of the Law.<sup>136</sup> It was however Jesus alone who proclaimed the principle effectively. Never has there been any one less a priest than Jesus, never a greater enemy to forms, which stifle religion under the pretext of protecting it. In this we are all his disciples and his successors; by this he laid the eternal foundation-stone of true religion; and, if religion be essential to mankind, by this he has merited the divine rank which the world has accorded him. An absolutely new idea, the

<sup>130</sup> Isaiah 1: 11-17; 58. Hos. 6: 6. Mic. 6: 6-8. Mal. 1: 10, 11.

<sup>131</sup> *Pirké Aboth.*, 1: 2.

<sup>132</sup> Eccles. 35: 1 *et seq.*

<sup>133</sup> Jerusalem Talmud, *Pesachim*, 6: 1; Babylonian Talmud, *id.* 66 a, and *Schabbath*, 31 a.

<sup>134</sup> *Quod Deus immut.* 1, 2; *De Abrah.* 22; *Quis rer. div. hæres*, 13, 55, 58; *De Prof.* 7, 8; *Quod omnis probus liber*, and *De vita contemplativa*.

<sup>135</sup> Babylonian Talmud, *Pesachim*, 67 b.

<sup>136</sup> Jerusalem Talmud, *Péah*, 1: 1.

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conception of a worship founded on purity of heart, and on the brotherhood of humanity, through him entered into the world—an idea so lofty that the Christian Church had necessarily to fall short of it, an idea which, in our days, only a few minds are capable of following.

An exquisite feeling for nature furnished him at every moment with vivid images. Sometimes the pointed terseness, which we call wit, adorned his aphorisms; at other times their strength lay in the happy use of popular proverbs. "How wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me cast out the mote out of thine eye; and lo, the beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."<sup>137</sup>

These lessons, long hidden in the heart of the young Master, had already brought a few disciples round him. The spirit of the time was favourable to small churches; it was the epoch of the Essenes or Therapeutæ. Rabbis, each having his distinctive teaching, Shemaïa, Abtalion, Hillel, Shammai, Judas the Gaulonite, Gamaliel, and many others, whose maxims form the Talmud,<sup>138</sup> sprang up on every side. Very little was written; the Jewish doctors of this period did not write books; everything was communicated by conversations, and in public teaching to which they sought to give a form that would make it remembered.<sup>139</sup> The day on which the young carpenter of Nazareth first began to proclaim these maxims—maxims for the most part already widely circulated, but, thanks to him, destined to regenerate the world—was therefore no striking event. It was only one rabbi more (the most fascinating of all, it is true) and

<sup>137</sup> Matt. 7: 4, 5; Luke 6: 41, 42. Cf. Babylonian Talmud, *Baba bathra*, 15 b; *Erachin*, 16 b.

<sup>138</sup> See especially *Pirké Aboth*, chap. 1.

<sup>139</sup> The Talmud, which sums up this body of teaching, hardly began to be put in writing earlier than the second Christian century.



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around him some young men, eager to hear him, and thirsting for knowledge of the unknown. It requires time to overcome the indifference of men. As yet there were no Christians; but true Christianity was founded, and certainly it was never more perfect than at this first moment of its existence. Jesus added nothing of a lasting nature to it afterwards. Indeed, in one sense, he compromised it; for sacrifices must be made for any idea to succeed; we never come unscathed from the battle of life.

To conceive the good, in fact, does not suffice; we must make it triumph amongst men. To accomplish this, less immaculate paths must be followed. Certainly, if the Gospel were limited to some chapters of Matthew and Luke, it would be more perfect and would not now be open to so many criticisms; but without miracles would it have converted the world? Had Jesus died at the period we have now reached in his career, there would not have been a single page in his life to wound us; but, while greater in the eyes of God, he would have remained unknown to men; he would have been lost in the multitude of great unknown spirits, who are the best of all spirits; the truth would not have been promulgated, and the world would not have profited from the immense moral grandeur with which his Father had endowed him. Jesus son of Sirach, and Hillel had uttered aphorisms almost as lofty as those of Jesus. But Hillel will never be accounted the true founder of Christianity. In ethics, as in art, precept is nothing, practice is everything. The idea which is hidden in a picture by Raphael is of little moment; it is only the picture itself which counts. So too in ethics, truth is only of value when it becomes more than a mere sentiment, and it does not attain its highest worth until realised in the world as fact. Men of indifferent morality have written very good maxims. Very virtuous men, on the other hand,

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have done nothing to perpetuate the tradition of virtue in the world. The palm is to him who has been mighty both in words and in works, who has discerned the good, and, at the price of his blood, has made it triumph. Jesus, from this dual point of view, is without equal; his glory retains its integrity, and will ever know renewal.

## CHAPTER VI

### *John the Baptist*

An extraordinary man, whose position, for lack of documentary evidence, remains for us to some extent enigmatical, appeared about this time, and unquestionably had some intercourse with Jesus. This intercourse tended somewhat to make the young prophet of Nazareth deviate from his path; but it suggested many important additions to his religious teaching, and, at all events, lent very powerful authority to his disciples in preaching faith in their Master to a certain class of Jews.

About the year 28 of our era (the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius) there spread through the whole of Palestine the reputation of a certain Johanan, or John, a young ascetic full of fervour and passion. John was of the priestly race,<sup>140</sup> and born, it would seem, at Juttah, near Hebron, or at Hebron itself.<sup>141</sup> Hebron, the patriarchal city *par excellence*, situated close to the desert of Judæa, and within a few hours' journey of the great desert of Arabia, was at that period what it is now—one of the bulwarks of Semitic ideas in their austerest form. From his childhood John was a *Nazir*—that is to say, bound down by vow to certain abstinences (Luke 1: 15). The desert, which was, so to speak, his environment, attracted him early in life (Luke 1: 80). There he led the life of an Indian

<sup>140</sup> Luke 1: 5; see also a citation from the Ebionite Gospel, preserved by Epiphanius (*Adv. hæres.* 30: 13).

<sup>141</sup> Luke 1: 39. It has been suggested, and is not unlikely, that in the "city of Juda" here mentioned we find the town of Juttah (Josh. 15: 55; 21: 16). Robinson (*Biblical Researches*, 1: 494; 2: 206) found this Juttah, still bearing the same name, two short hours to the south of Hebron.

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Yogi, clad only in skins or stuffs of camels' hair, and having for his food locusts and wild honey.<sup>142</sup> A certain number of disciples had gathered around him, sharing his life and meditating on his stern doctrine. We might imagine ourselves transported to the banks of the Ganges, if peculiar traits did not show us in this recluse the last descendant of the great prophets of Israel.

From the time when the Jewish nation had begun to be stricken with a kind of despair by reflecting upon its destiny, the popular imagination had eagerly reverted to the ancient prophets. Now, of all the men of the past, the remembrance of whom came like the dreams of a troubled night to awaken and excite the people, the greatest was Elias. This giant among prophets, in his rude retreat at Carmel, sharing the life of wild beasts, dwelling in the hollows of the rocks, whence he came forth like a thunderbolt, to make and unmake kings, had become by successive transformations a kind of superhuman being, sometimes visible, sometimes invisible, and as one who had not known death. It was generally believed that Elias would return and restore Israel.<sup>143</sup> The austere life which he had led, the terrible memories he had left behind him—memories which still weigh heavily upon the East<sup>144</sup>—that darkly imagined figure which, even in our own time, causes terror and death—all this cycle of legends charged with vengeance and fear, vividly impressed men's minds, and stamped, as with a birthmark, all the creations of the popular imagination. Whoever aspired to act powerfully

<sup>142</sup> Matt. 3: 4. Mark 1: 6; fragment of the Ebionite Gospel in Epiphanius, *Adv. hæres.* 30: 13.

<sup>143</sup> Mal. 3: 23, 24. Eccles. 48: 10. Matt. 16: 14; 17: 10–13. Mark 6: 15; 8: 28; 9: 10–13. Luke 9: 8, 19. John 1: 21, 25.

<sup>144</sup> The ferocious Abdallah, pasha of St. Jean d'Acre, had nearly died of fright at having seen him in a dream, standing upright upon his mountain. In Christian churches he is seen in pictures surrounded by severed heads; and Moslem believers live in awe of him.

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upon the people had to imitate Elias; and, as solitary life had been his essential characteristic, they were wont to conceive "the man of God" as a hermit. They imagined that all holy men had had their days of penitence, of solitude, and of austerity.<sup>145</sup> Withdrawal to the desert thus became the condition of high destinies and their prelude.

No doubt this thought of imitation had greatly exercised John's mind. The idea of anchorite life, so opposed to the spirit of the ancient Jewish people, and to which vows, such as those of the Nazirs and the Rechabites, had no resemblance, was spreading throughout Judæa. The Essenes, or Therapeutæ, were grouped near the birthplace of John, on the eastern shores of the Dead Sea.<sup>146</sup> Abstinence from animal food, wine, and sexual intercourse was regarded as the novitiate of prophets.<sup>147</sup> It was imagined that the chiefs of sects ought to be recluses, having rules and institutions of their own, like the founders of religious orders. Some of the teachers of the young were also anchorites, somewhat resembling the spiritual instructors (*gurus*) of Brahminism. Indeed, might there not be in this a remote influence of the Indian silent sages (*munis*)? Perhaps some of these wandering Buddhist monks who overran the world, as did the first Franciscans in later times, preaching by their deeds, and converting people who did not know their language, might have turned their steps towards Judæa, as they certainly did in the direction of Syria and Babylon.<sup>148</sup> On this point we are ignorant. Babylon had for some time really been a home of Bud-

<sup>145</sup> Ascension of Isaiah, 2: 9-11.

<sup>146</sup> Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 5: 17; Epiphan. *Adv. hæc.* 19: 1, 2; Sauley, *Voyage autour de la mer Morte*, 1: 142 et seq.

<sup>147</sup> Daniel 1: 12-17; 10: 2, 3. Enoch 83: 2; 85: 3. 4 Esdras 9: 24, 26; 12: 51.

<sup>148</sup> I have developed this hint in the *Hist. génér. des langues Sémitiques*, 3, 4: 1; *Journal Asiatique*, February and March, 1856.

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dhism. Budasp (Bodhisattva) was reputed to be a wise Chaldean, and the founder of Sabeism. *Sabeism* was, as its etymology indicates, *baptism*<sup>149</sup>—that is to say, the religion of many baptisms, and the source of the sect, still existing, called “Christians of St. John,” or Mendaïtes, which the Arabs term *el Mogtasila*, “the Baptists.”<sup>150</sup> It is very difficult to unravel these vague analogies. The sects floating between Judaism, Christianity, Baptism, and Sabeism, which were to be found in the region beyond the Jordan during the early centuries of our era,<sup>151</sup> by reason of the confused accounts of them which have come down to us, present a most singular problem to criticism. In any case it may be considered that many of the external practices of John, of the Essenes,<sup>152</sup> and of the Jewish spiritual teachers of this period were derived from influences then but recently received from the far East. The fundamental practice which characterised the sect of John and gave it its name, has always had its centre in lower Chaldea, and there constitutes a religion which has survived to the present day.

This practice was baptism, or total immersion. Religious ablutions were already familiar to the Jewish, as they were to all other Eastern religions.<sup>153</sup> Amongst the Essenes they

<sup>149</sup> The Aramæan verb *saba*, origin of the name “Sabian,” is equivalent to baptize (*βαπτίζω*).

<sup>150</sup> I have discussed this more at length in the *Journal Asiatique*, Nov.-Dec., 1853; Aug.-Sept., 1855. It is to be remarked that the Elkesaites, a Sabæan (or Baptist) sect, occupied nearly the same region as the Essenes—the eastern shore of the Dead Sea—and were confounded with them. (Epiphanius *Adv. hær.* 19: 1, 2, 4; 30: 16, 17; 53: 1, 2. *Philosophumena*, 9, 3: 15, 16; 10, 20: 29.)

<sup>151</sup> See notices by Epiphanius of the Essenes, Hemerobaptists, Nazarenes, Ossæans, Nazaræans, Ebionites, Sampsæans (*Adv. hær.* 1: 2), and by the author of the *Philosophumena* on the Elkesaites, 9: 10.

<sup>152</sup> Epiphanius *ibid.*, 19, 30, 53.

<sup>153</sup> Mark 7: 4; Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 5: 2; Justin, *Tryph.* 17, 29, 80; Epiphanius, *Adv. hær.* 17.



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had had a peculiar development.<sup>154</sup> Baptism had become a usual ceremony on the reception of proselytes into the bosom of the Jewish religion, a sort of initiatory rite.<sup>155</sup> Never before John the Baptist, however, had either this importance or this form been given to immersion. John had selected the scene of his activity in that part of the desert of Judæa which is in the vicinity of the Dead Sea.<sup>156</sup> On the occasions when he administered baptism he repaired to the banks of the Jordan (Luke 3: 3) either to Bethany or Bethabara,<sup>157</sup> upon the Eastern shore, probably opposite Jericho, or to a place called *Ænon*, or "the Fountains,"<sup>158</sup> near Salim, where there was much water.<sup>159</sup> Considerable multitudes, especially of the tribe of Judah, hastened to the place to be baptised by him.<sup>160</sup> Thus in a few months he became one of the most influential men in Judæa, a man whom the world could not afford to ignore.

The people took him for a prophet,<sup>161</sup> and many imagined

<sup>154</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 2, 8: 5, 7, 8, 13.

<sup>155</sup> Mishna, *Pesachim*, 8: 8. Babyl. Talmud, *Jebamoth*, 46 b; *Kerithuth*, 9 a; *Aboda zara*, 57 a. *Masseket Gerim* (ed. Kirchheim, 1851), 38-40.

<sup>156</sup> Matt. 3: 1; Mark 1: 4.

<sup>157</sup> John 1: 28; 3: 26. All the ancient MSS. have "Bethany"; but as no Bethany is known hereabout, Origen (*in Joann.* 6: 24) proposes "Bethabara," a correction widely accepted. The two names are alike in meaning, seeming to indicate a ferry.

<sup>158</sup> "*Ænon*" is the Chaldæan plural *ænawan*, "springs."

<sup>159</sup> John 3: 23. The situation is doubtful. The Synoptics uniformly place the scene of John's baptism on the bank of the Jordan (Matt. 3: 6; Mark 1: 5; Luke 3: 3); but the circumstance emphasized in the Fourth Gospel, that "there was much water there," is void of sense if we suppose the spot to be close to the river. Taking together verses 22, 23 of John 3, and verses 3, 4 of chap. 4, we are led, besides, to think that Salim was in Judæa. It seems that near the ruin *Ramet-el-Khalil*, near Hebron, there is a locality which meets all these conditions (Sepp, *Jerusalem und das Heilige Land*, Schaffhausen, 1863, 1: 520 *et seq.*). Jerome would place Salim far to the north, near Beth-Shean or Scythopolis; but Robinson (*Bibl. Res.*, 3: 333) could find nothing there to justify this claim.

<sup>160</sup> Mark 1: 5; Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 5: 2.

<sup>161</sup> Matt. 14: 5; 21: 26.

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that it was Elijah who had risen again.<sup>162</sup> Belief in such resurrections was widely spread;<sup>163</sup> it was thought that God would raise from the tomb certain of the ancient prophets to guide Israel toward her final destiny.<sup>164</sup> Others held John to be the Messiah himself, although he made no such pretension.<sup>165</sup> The priests and the scribes, who were opposed to this revival of prophetism, and ever hostile to enthusiasts, despised him. But the popularity of the Baptist impressed them, and they dared not speak against him.<sup>166</sup> It was a victory gained by popular sentiment over priestly aristocracy. When the chief priests were forced to declare themselves explicitly on this point, they were very much embarrassed (Matt. 21: 25, 26).

Baptism with John was only a sign calculated to impress the minds of the people and to prepare them for some great movement. There can be no doubt that he was possessed in the highest degree with hope for the coming of the Messiah. "Repent ye," he said, "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3: 2). He announced a great wrath to come, that is to say, terrible catastrophes which were about to occur, and declared that even now the axe was laid upon the root of the tree, and that the tree would soon be cast into the fire. He represented the Messiah with a fan in his hand, gathering the good wheat into his garner and burning the chaff. Repentance, of which baptism was the sign, alms-giving, and moral reformation,<sup>167</sup> were in John's view the great means of preparation for the impending events. We do not know exactly in what light he conceived of these events; but it is certain that he

<sup>162</sup> Matt. 11: 14; Mark 6: 15; John 1: 21.

<sup>163</sup> Matt. 14: 2; Luke 9: 8.

<sup>164</sup> See p. 147, note 2.

<sup>165</sup> Luke 3: 15-17; John 1: 20.

<sup>166</sup> Matt. 21: 25, 26; Luke 7: 30.

<sup>167</sup> Luke 3: 11-14; Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18, 5: 2.

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preached with much force against the same adversaries as did Jesus, against rich priests, the Pharisees, the doctors, in one word, against official Judaism; and that, like Jesus, he was especially welcomed by the despised classes.<sup>168</sup> He thought nothing of the title "son of Abraham," and said that God could raise up sons to Abraham from the stones of the highway (Matt. 3:9). It does not appear that he possessed even the germ of the great idea which caused the triumph of Jesus, the conception of a pure religion; but he powerfully served this idea in substituting a private rite for the legal ceremonies in which priests were necessary, as the mediæval flagellants were the precursors of the reformation, by depriving the official clergy of the monopoly of the sacraments and of absolution. The general tone of his sermons was severe and stern. The expressions with which he assailed his opponents appear to have been most violent. His preaching was one harsh continuous invective.<sup>169</sup> It is probable that he did not remain a stranger to politics. Josephus, who, through his teacher Banou was brought into almost direct contact with John, cautiously suggests as much,<sup>170</sup> and the catastrophe which put an end to John's life seems to imply it. His disciples led a very austere life (Matt. 9:14), fasted often and affected a sad demeanour full of disquietude. At times we catch a glimpse of community of possessions, and the theory that the rich man is bound to share all that he has with the poor.<sup>171</sup> Already the poor man appeared as the one who would be specially benefited by the kingdom of God.

<sup>168</sup> Matt. 21:32. Luke 3:12-14.

<sup>169</sup> Matt. 3:7. Luke 3:7.

<sup>170</sup> *Antiquities*, 18, 5:2. It is to be noted that when Josephus speaks of the secret and more or less revolutionary doctrines of his countrymen, he hides every hint of messianic beliefs, and, not to offend the Romans, spreads over these doctrines a wash of commonplace, which makes all the heads of Jewish sects seem moral lecturers, or Stoics.

<sup>171</sup> Luke 3:11 (weak authority).

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Although the centre of the Baptist's action was Judæa, his fame soon penetrated to Galilee and reached Jesus, who, by his first discourses, had already gathered about him a small circle of hearers. As yet possessing little authority, and doubtless impelled by the desire of seeing a teacher whose teaching had so much in common with his own ideas, Jesus left Galilee and repaired with his little group of disciples to John.<sup>172</sup> The new-comers had themselves baptised like everyone else. John welcomed the group of Galilean disciples and had no objection to their remaining distinct from his own. Both teachers were young; they had many ideas in common; they loved one another, and publicly vied with each other in kindly feeling. At the first glance, such a fact surprises us in John the Baptist, and we are tempted to call it in question. Humility has never been a feature of strong Jewish souls. It would seem as though a man of such stubborn character, a kind of perpetually irritated Lamennais, would be very passionate, and suffer neither rivalry nor half adhesion. But this manner of viewing things rests upon a false conception of the personality of John. We imagine him as a man of ripened

<sup>172</sup> Matt. 3: 13-17; Mark 1: 9-11; Luke 3: 21, 22; John 1: 29-34, and 3: 22-24. The Synoptics represent Jesus as having come to John before assuming any public part (comp. Epiphanius, *Adv. hæres.* 30: 13, 14; Justin, *Tryph.* 88). But if it is true, as they say, that John at once recognised and warmly welcomed him, we must suppose that Jesus was already a teacher of some repute. The Fourth Gospel brings him twice to John,—first, when he is still obscure; later, with a company of disciples. Without taking into account the exact journeyings of Jesus,—which cannot be fixed, owing to contradictions in the documents and to the disregard of the evangelists for precision in such things,—or denying that Jesus may have gone to John before he was yet publicly known, we accept the account (John 3: 22-24) that he had already a regular school before submitting to John's baptism. The earlier portion of the Fourth Gospel is made up of separate notes strung together. The strict order of time which they seem to follow comes from the writer's fondness for the appearance of precision. (See above Introd., p. 61.)

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years; he was, on the contrary, of the same age as Jesus,<sup>173</sup> and very young according to the ideas of the time.<sup>174</sup> In mental development he was the brother and not the father of Jesus. The two young enthusiasts, full of the same hopes and the same hatreds, were able to make common cause and to lend each other mutual support. Certainly an aged teacher, seeing a man without celebrity approach, and maintain an independent attitude toward him, would have rebelled; there are few examples of a leader of a school receiving his future successor with warmth. But youth is capable of any sacrifice, and it may be admitted that John, having recognised in Jesus a spirit akin to his own, accepted him without any personal reservation. These friendly relations afterward became the starting-point of a whole system developed by the evangelists, which consisted in giving the divine mission of Jesus the primary basis of the witness borne by John. Such was the degree of authority won by the Baptist, that it was not deemed possible to find in the world a better guarantee. But far from John abdicating in favour of Jesus, Jesus, during all the time that he spent with him, recognised him as his superior, and only timidly developed his own individual genius.

It seems in fact that, despite his profound originality, Jesus, for some weeks at least, was the imitator of John. His way was still dark before him. At all times moreover Jesus yielded much to opinion, and adopted many things which were not in accord with his own ideas, or for which he cared little, merely because they were popular; but these accessories never injured his leading principle, and were always subordinated to it. Baptism had been

<sup>173</sup> We accept here the testimony of Luke (chap. 1), though all the details—in particular those concerning the kinship of John and Jesus—belong to legend.

<sup>174</sup> See John 8: 57.

brought by John into very great favour; Jesus thought himself obliged to follow his example; therefore he baptised, and his disciples baptised also.<sup>175</sup> No doubt they accompanied the ceremony with preaching similar to that of John. The Jordan was thus covered on all sides with Baptists, whose preaching was more or less successful. The pupil soon equalled the master, and baptism at his hands was much sought after. There was on this point some jealousy among the disciples;<sup>176</sup> the followers of John came to complain to him of the growing success of the young Galilean, whose baptism, they thought, would soon supplant his own. But both teachers remained above such pettiness. According to one tradition,<sup>177</sup> it was while in John's company that Jesus formed the group of his most noted disciples. The superiority of John was too indisputable for Jesus, who was as yet little known, to think of contesting it. Jesus only wished to grow up under John's protection; and he believed himself obliged, in order to gain the multitude's attention, to employ the external means which had given John such astonishing success. When he began to preach again after John's arrest, the first words put into his mouth are but the repetition of one of the Baptist's familiar phrases.<sup>178</sup> Many other of John's expressions may be found repeated word for word in the discourses of Jesus.<sup>179</sup> The two schools appear to have long lived on good terms with each other;<sup>180</sup> and after the death of John, Jesus, as his faithful friend, was one of the first to be informed of the event.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>175</sup> John 3: 22-26; 4: 1, 2. The parenthesis of verse 2 seems to be a later comment, or perhaps a scruple of the writer, who corrects himself.

<sup>176</sup> John 3: 26; 4: 1.

<sup>177</sup> John 1: 35-37; confirmed by Acts 1: 21, 22.

<sup>178</sup> Matt. 3: 2; 4: 17.

<sup>179</sup> Matt. 3: 7; 12: 34; 23: 33.

<sup>180</sup> Matt. 11: 2-13.

<sup>181</sup> Matt. 14: 12.



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John was soon cut short in his prophetic career. Like the ancient Jewish prophets, he was, in the highest degree, a censor of the established authorities.<sup>182</sup> The extreme daring with which he expressed himself upon their conduct could not fail to involve him in trouble. In Judæa, John does not appear to have been molested by Pilate; but in Perea, beyond the Jordan, he passed into the domain of Antipas. This tyrant was ill at ease at the political leaven which was so little concealed by John in his preaching. There was something suspicious about these great assemblages of men gathered around the Baptist by religious and patriotic enthusiasm.<sup>183</sup> A purely personal grievance was also added to these motives of state, and rendered the austere censor's death inevitable.

One of the most strongly marked characters of this tragical family of the Herods was Herodias, granddaughter of Herod the Great, a violent, ambitious, and passionate woman, who detested Judaism and despised its laws.<sup>184</sup> She had been married, probably against her own inclinations, to her uncle Herod, son of Mariamne,<sup>185</sup> who had been disinherited by Herod the Great,<sup>186</sup> and had never played any public part. The subordinate position of her husband, as compared with that of other members of the family, gave her no peace; she determined to be sovereign at whatever cost.<sup>187</sup> Antipas was the instrument of whom she made use. This man of weak will having fallen violently in love with her, promised to marry her, and to repudiate his first wife, daughter of Hareth, king of Petra,

<sup>182</sup> Luke 3: 19.

<sup>183</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18, 5: 2.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 5: 4.

<sup>185</sup> In Matt. 14: 3 and Mark 6: 17 he is called Philip; but this is certainly an error (Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18, 5: 1, 4). Philip's wife was Salome, daughter of Herodias.

<sup>186</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, 17, 4: 2.

<sup>187</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18, 7: 1, 2; *Wars*, 2, 9: 6.

and emir of the neighbouring tribes of Perea. The Arabian princess, receiving a warning of this project, resolved to fly. Concealing her plan, she pretended that she wished to make a journey to Machero, in her father's territory, and had herself taken thither by the officers of Antipas.<sup>188</sup>

Makaur,<sup>189</sup> or Machero, was a colossal fortress, built by Alexander Jannæus and restored by Herod, in one of the most abrupt valleys (*wâdys*) to the east of the Dead Sea.<sup>190</sup> It was a wild and desolate country, abounding in strange legends, and believed to be haunted by demons.<sup>191</sup> The fortress was just on the boundary of the countries of Hareth and of Antipas. At that time it was in the possession of Hareth. The latter, having been warned, had had everything prepared for the flight of his daughter, who was conducted from tribe to tribe to Petra.

The almost incestuous union<sup>192</sup> of Antipas and Herodias then took place. The Jewish laws of marriage were a constant stone of offence between the irreligious family of the Herods and the strict Jews.<sup>193</sup> As the members of that numerous and somewhat isolated dynasty were obliged to marry amongst themselves, frequent violations of the limits prescribed by the Law took place. John, in severely attacking Antipas, echoed the general feeling.<sup>194</sup> This was more than enough to make the latter decide to follow up his suspicions. He caused the Baptist to be arrested, and ordered him to be imprisoned in the fortress of Machero,

<sup>188</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18, 5: 1.

<sup>189</sup> This form occurs in the Jerusalem Talmud (*Schebiit*, 9: 4) and in the Jonathan and Jerusalem Targums (Num. 22: 35).

<sup>190</sup> Now Makaur, above the wadi Zerka-Main (Vignes' map of the Dead Sea; Paris, 1865).

<sup>191</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 7, 6: 1, 2.

<sup>192</sup> Levit. 18: 16.

<sup>193</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, 15, 7: 10.

<sup>194</sup> Matt. 14: 4; Mark 6: 18; Luke 3: 19.

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which he had probably seized after the departure of the daughter of Hareth.<sup>195</sup>

Antipas, who was more timid than cruel, did not desire to put him to death. According to certain accounts, he feared a popular sedition (Matt. 14: 5). According to another version,<sup>196</sup> he had taken pleasure in listening to the prisoner, and these interviews had cast him into great perplexities. It is certain that the captivity was prolonged, and that John, from the depths of his prison, still exercised a wide influence.<sup>197</sup> He corresponded with his disciples, and we shall see that he once more had relations with Jesus. His faith that the advent of the Messiah was at hand only grew firmer; he attentively followed the movements outside his prison walls, and sought to discover in them signs that favoured the accomplishment of the hopes on which he had lived.

<sup>195</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18, 5: 2.

<sup>196</sup> Mark 6: 20 (reading *ἡπορεῖ* for *ἐπολεῖ*; cf. Luke 9: 7, *διηπορεῖ*).

<sup>197</sup> An oriental prison has no cells. The convict, with feet fettered, is kept in sight in a court or open space, where he talks freely with the passers-by.

## CHAPTER VII

### *The Kingdom of God*

Up to the arrest of John, which may be approximately dated in the summer of the year 29, Jesus did not leave the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea and the Jordan. A sojourn in the wilderness of Judæa was generally considered as a preparation for great things, as a sort of "retreat" before public action. In this Jesus followed the example of others, and passed forty days with no other companions than wild animals, keeping a rigorous fast. The disciples greatly exercised their imaginative powers concerning this sojourn. In popular belief the desert was reputed to be the abode of demons.<sup>198</sup> There exist in the world few regions more desolate, more God-forsaken, more shut out from life, than the rocky declivity which forms the western shore of the Dead Sea. It was believed that during the time which Jesus spent in this land of terror, he had passed through terrible trials; that Satan had assailed him with illusions, and tempted him with seductive promises; and that afterwards, to reward him for his victory, angels had come to minister to him.<sup>199</sup>

It was probably on emerging from the wilderness that Jesus learnt of the arrest of John the Baptist. He no longer had any reason to prolong his stay in a country

<sup>198</sup> Tobit 8: 3; Luke 11: 24.

<sup>199</sup> Matt. 4: 1-11; Mark 1: 12-13; Luke 4: 1-13. It is true that the striking likeness of these accounts to the legends of the *Vendidad* (farg. 19) and the *Lalitaristara* (chaps. 17, 18, 21) might lead us to regard this stay in the desert as only a myth; but the lean, curt account of Mark, here plainly reflecting the earliest tradition, points to a real fact, which later made the basis of legendary expansion.

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which was half foreign to him. Perhaps also he feared being involved in the severities exercised towards John, and had no wish to expose himself, at a time at which, considering the little celebrity he possessed, his death could in no way serve the progress of his ideas. He returned to Galilee,<sup>200</sup> his true home, ripened by a great experience and having by intercourse with a great man of very different nature acquired full consciousness of his own originality.

On the whole, the influence of John had been more injurious than useful to Jesus. It checked his development; for everything leads us to believe that when he descended towards the Jordan he had higher conceptions than those of John, and that his temporary inclination to baptism was a concession on his part. Perhaps if the Baptist, whose authority it would have been difficult for him to avoid, had remained at liberty, Jesus would not have been able to throw off the yoke of external rites and ceremonies, and, in all probability, would have continued to be an unknown Jewish sectary; for the world would not have abandoned its old ceremonies merely for others of a different kind. It has been by the attractive power of a religion, free from all external forms, that Christianity has won lofty minds. When the Baptist was imprisoned his school soon dwindled away, and Jesus was once more left to take up his own peculiar work. The only things that, in some measure, he owed to John were lessons in preaching and popular action. From that time indeed he preached with much greater power, and made the multitude feel his authority.<sup>201</sup>

It seems too that his sojourn with John had, less by the influence of the Baptist than by the natural progress of his own thought, greatly ripened his ideas on "the kingdom of heaven." Henceforth his watchword is the "good tid-

<sup>200</sup> Matt. 4: 12; Mark 1: 14; Luke 4: 14; John 4: 3.

<sup>201</sup> Matt. 7: 29; Mark 1: 22; Luke 4: 32.

ings," the proclamation that the kingdom of God is at hand (Mark 1:14, 15). Jesus is no longer merely a delightful moralist striving to express sublime lessons in short and vivid aphorisms; he is the transcendent revolutionary who seeks to regenerate the world from its very foundation, and to establish upon earth the ideal which he has conceived. "To await the kingdom of God" is henceforth synonymous with being a disciple of Jesus (Mark 15:43). This expression, "kingdom of God," or "kingdom of heaven," was, as we have said, already long familiar to the Jews. But Jesus gave it a moral sense, a social application, which even the author of the Book of Daniel, in his apocalyptic enthusiasm, had scarcely dared to perceive in it.

He found that, in the world as it is, evil reigns supreme. Satan is "the prince of this world" (John 12:31), and everything obeys him. The kings slay the prophets. The priests and the doctors do not that which they command others to do; the just are persecuted, and the only portion of the righteous is weeping. The "world" is in a manner the enemy of God and his saints;<sup>202</sup> but God will awaken and will avenge his saints. The day is at hand, for the cup of iniquity is filled. Righteousness will reign in its turn.

A great and sudden revolution is to mark the advent of this reign of righteousness. The world will seem as it were reversed; the actual state being bad, to represent the future one need but conceive nearly the contrary to that which exists. The first shall be last.<sup>203</sup> A new order of things will govern humanity. Now, good and evil are mixed like the tares and the good grain in a field. The

<sup>202</sup> John 1: 10; 7: 7; 14: 17, 22, 27; 15: 18-20; 16: 8, 20, 33; 17: 9, 14, 16, 25. This force of the word "world" is especially marked in the writings of Paul and those ascribed to John.

<sup>203</sup> Matt. 19: 30; 20: 16. Mark 10: 31. Luke 13: 30.



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master lets them grow up together; but the hour of violent separation will come.<sup>204</sup> The kingdom of God will be as the casting of a great net, which takes both good and bad fish; the good are gathered into vessels, and the rest are thrown away.<sup>205</sup> The germ of this great revolution will not be visible at the first. It will be like a grain of mustard-seed, which is the smallest of seeds, but which, sowed in the earth, becomes a tree under the foliage of which the birds come for rest; <sup>206</sup> or it will be like the leaven which, hidden in the meal, makes the whole ferment.<sup>207</sup> A series of parables, which were often obscure, was intended to express the suddenness of this advent, its apparent injustices, and its inevitable and final character.<sup>208</sup>

Who was to establish this kingdom of God? It should be remembered that the first idea of Jesus, an idea so deeply rooted in him that it had probably no beginning and belonged to the very foundation of his being, was that he was the Son of God, the friend of his Father, the doer of his will. The answer of Jesus to such a question then could not be dubious. The persuasion that he was to make God reign upon earth took absolute possession of his spirit. He looked upon himself as the universal reformer. Heaven, earth, the whole of nature, madness, disease, and death, were but his instruments. In his paroxysm of heroic determination he believed himself omnipotent. If the earth would not submit to this supreme transformation it would be overthrown and purified with fire and the breath of God. A new heaven would be created, and the whole world would be peopled with the angels of God.<sup>209</sup>

<sup>204</sup> Matt. 13: 24-30.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid. 47-50.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid. 31, 32; Mark 4: 31, 32; Luke 13: 19.

<sup>207</sup> Matt. 13: 33. Luke 13: 21.

<sup>208</sup> Matt. 13; 18: 23-35; 20: 1-18. Luke 13: 18-30.

<sup>209</sup> Matt. 22: 30. Compare his reported words (Ep. of Barnabas, 6):

A sweeping revolution,<sup>210</sup> even extending to nature itself—such was the fundamental idea of Jesus. It was probably from this time forth that he renounced politics; the example of Judas the Gaulonite had shown him the uselessness of popular seditions. He never dreamed of rising in revolt against the Romans and tetrarchs. His was not the uncontrolled and anarchical principle of the Gaulonite. His submission to the established powers, though in reality derisive, was in appearance complete. He paid tribute to Cæsar in order to avoid scandal. Freedom and right were not of this world—why should he disturb his life with vain anxieties? Despising the earth, and convinced that the present world was not worth thinking about, he found refuge in his ideal kingdom; he established the great doctrine of transcendent disdain,<sup>211</sup> the true doctrine of the liberty of the soul, which alone can give peace. But as yet he had not said, “My kingdom is not of this world.” Much darkness obscured even his clearest visions. At times strange temptations would cross his mind. In the desert of Judæa Satan had offered him the kingdoms of the earth. Lacking in knowledge of the real strength of the Roman empire as he was, and feeling the enthusiasm which was stirring Judæa to its depths and was soon to culminate in a terrible outbreak of armed resistance, he might well hope to found a kingdom by his numerous following and his own audacity. Many times perhaps the supreme question presented itself to him—will the kingdom of God be achieved by force or by gentleness, by revolt or by patience? One day, it is said, the simple folk of Galilee wished to carry him away and make him king (John 6: 15), but Jesus fled into the mountains and remained there for some time in “Behold, I do the last, even as the first” (ἰδοὺ ποιῶ τὰ πρῶτα ὡς τὰ ἔσχατα, ed. Hilgenfeld, p. 18).

<sup>210</sup> Restitution of all things” (κατάστασις πάντων, Acts 3: 21).

<sup>211</sup> Matt. 17: 24-27; 22: 16-23.

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solitude. His noble nature preserved him from the error which would have made him an agitator or a rebel chief, a Theudas or a Barkokeba.

The revolution he wished to bring about was always a moral revolution; but he had not yet begun to trust to angels and the last trumpet for its execution. It was upon men and by men themselves that he wished to act. A visionary, who had no other idea than the proximity of the last judgment, would not have had this solicitude for man's amelioration, and would not have founded the finest system of practical moral teaching that humanity has ever received. No doubt his ideas retained much vagueness, and it was rather a noble feeling than a settled design that urged him to the sublime work which was achieved by him, though in a very different manner from that which he imagined.

It was indeed the kingdom of God, or in other words, the kingdom of the soul, which he founded; and if Jesus, from the bosom of his Father, beholds his work bearing fruit in the history of the world, he may indeed say with truth, "This is what I have desired." That which Jesus established, that which will remain eternally his, allowing for the imperfections inseparable from everything realised by mankind, is the doctrine of the freedom of the soul. Greece had already conceived exalted ideas on this subject.<sup>212</sup> Some of the Stoics had learnt how to be free even under a tyrant. But in general the ancient world had regarded liberty as being attached to certain political forms; freedom was personified in Harmodius and Aristogiton, Brutus and Cassius. The true Christian enjoys more real freedom; here below he is an exile; what matters it to him who is his transitory governor on this earth, which is not his home? For him liberty is truth.<sup>213</sup> Jesus was not suf-

<sup>212</sup> See Stobæus, *Florilegium*, chaps. 62, 77, 86 *et seq.*

<sup>213</sup> John 8: 32-36.

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ficiently acquainted with history to understand that such a doctrine came most opportunely at the moment when republican liberty was coming to an end, and the small municipal states of antiquity were being absorbed in the unity of the Roman empire. But his admirable good sense, and the truly prophetic instinct which he had of his mission, guided him with marvellous certainty. By the saying, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's,"<sup>214</sup> he created something that stood apart from politics, a refuge for souls in the midst of the empire of brute force. Assuredly such a doctrine had its dangers. To lay down as a principle that legitimate power is to be recognised by the inscription on its coins, to proclaim that the perfect man pays tribute disdainfully and without question, was to destroy republicanism in its ancient form, and to favour all tyranny. Christianity has, in this sense, contributed much to weaken the feeling of civic duty, and to deliver the world to the absolute power of existing circumstances. But by constituting an immense free association, which, for three hundred years, was able to stand apart from politics, Christianity has amply compensated for the wrong it did to civic virtues. The power of the state has been limited to the things of earth; the mind has been freed, at least the terrible rod of Roman omnipotence has been broken for ever.

The man who is, before all else, preoccupied with the duties of public life does not readily forgive those who regard anything as being higher than his party quarrels. Above all he blames those who subordinate political to social questions, and profess a certain indifference for the former. In one sense he is right, for exclusive power is prejudicial to the proper government of human affairs. But what

<sup>214</sup> Mark 12: 17.

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progress have political "parties" caused in the general morality of our species? If Jesus, instead of founding his heavenly kingdom, had betaken himself to Rome, and expended his energies in plotting against Tiberius or in regretting Germanicus, what would have become of the world? As an austere republican or zealous patriot, he would not have arrested the great current of the events of his age; but in his declaration that politics are of minor importance, he revealed to the world this truth—that one's country is not everything, and that man precedes the citizen in time and is on a higher plane.

The principles of our positive science are offended by the dreams which formed part of the ideal scheme of Jesus. We know the history of the earth; ~~cosmical~~ cosmical revolutions of the kind expected by Jesus are only the results of geological or astronomical causes, the connection of which with spiritual things has never yet been demonstrated. But, in order to be just to great masters, they must not be judged by their share of popular prejudices. Columbus discovered America, though he started from very erroneous ideas; Newton believed his foolish explanation of the Apocalypse to be as true as his theory of the world. Shall we place an ordinary man of our own time above a Francis of Assisi, a St. Bernard, a Joan of Arc, or a Luther, because he is free from errors which they professed? Is it desirable that we should measure men by the correctness of their ideas of physics, and by the more or less exact knowledge which they possess of the real constitution of the world? We must better understand the position of Jesus and the principles underlying his power. Eighteenth century deism and a certain kind of Protestantism have accustomed us to think of the founder of the Christian faith only as a great moralist, a benefactor of mankind. We see nothing more in the Gospel than good maxims; we throw a veil of pru-

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dence over the strange intellectual state in which the Gospel came into being. In like manner there are persons who regret that the French Revolution more than once departed from principles, and that it was not brought about by wise and moderate men. Let us not impose our petty and bourgeois programmes on these extraordinary movements that are so far above our ordinary conceptions. Let us continue to admire the "morality of the Gospel"—let us suppress in our religious teachings the chimera which was its very soul; but do not let us believe that the world is to be stirred by simple ideas of happiness or individual morality. The idea of Jesus was much more profound; it was the most revolutionary idea ever existent in a human mind; it should be taken in its totality, and not with those timid suppressions which deprive it of precisely that which has made it of service in the regeneration of mankind.

Essentially the ideal is ever a Utopia. When nowadays we wish to represent the Christ as he appears to the consciousness of our own generation, the consoler and the judge of modern times, what do we do? That which Jesus himself did eighteen hundred and thirty years ago. We suppose the conditions of the real world as being quite other than they are; we represent a moral liberator breaking without weapons the chains of the negro, ameliorating the condition of the poor, delivering the nations from the hands of their oppressor. We forget that this implies the world revolutionised, the climate of Virginia and that of the Congo modified, the blood and the race of millions of men transformed, our social complications restored to a chimerical simplicity, and the political stratifications of Europe displaced from their natural order. The "restoration of all things" <sup>215</sup> desired by Jesus was not more difficult. The new earth, the new heaven, the new Jerusalem descending

<sup>215</sup> Acts 3:21.



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from above, the cry: "Behold I make all things new!"<sup>216</sup> are characteristics common to all reformers. The contrast of the ideal with the pitiful reality will always cause human revolts against dispassionate reason such as these, which the man of petty mind regards as madness until the day of their triumph, when those who have opposed them will be the first to recognise their reasonableness.

That there may have been a contradiction between the dogma of an approaching end of the world and the general ethical system of Jesus, conceived in view of a permanent state of mankind, nearly analogous to that which now exists, none will attempt to deny.<sup>217</sup> It was precisely this contradiction that ensured the success of his work. The millenarian alone would have done nothing that was lasting, the moralist alone nothing that was powerful. The millenarianism gave the impulse, the ethics insured the future. In this way Christianity united the two conditions of great success in this world—a revolutionary starting-point, and the possibility of continued existence. Everything that is to succeed must respond to these two wants; for the world seeks at once to change and to endure. Jesus, at the same time that he announced an unparalleled revolution in human affairs, proclaimed the principles upon which society has rested for eighteen hundred years.

That indeed which distinguishes Jesus from the agitators of his own time, and from those of all ages, is his perfect idealism. Jesus was, in some respects, an anarchist, for he had no idea of civil government. That government seemed to him purely and simply an abuse. He spoke of it in vague terms, and as a man of the people with no idea of politics. Every magistrate appeared to him a natural

<sup>216</sup> Rev. 21: 5.

<sup>217</sup> The English Adventists show the same inconsistency,—a belief in the near end of the world, along with much good sense in common life, and wonderful shrewdness in manufactures and trade.

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enemy of the people of God; he predicted that his disciples would be in conflict with the civil powers, without thinking for a moment that there was anything of which to be ashamed in this.<sup>218</sup> But he never showed any desire to put himself in the place of the rich and the mighty. He desired to annihilate riches and power, but not to seize them for himself. He predicted that his disciples<sup>219</sup> would suffer persecution and all manner of punishments; but never once did the thought of armed resistance manifest itself. The idea of being all-powerful by suffering and resignation, and of triumphing over force by purity of heart, is indeed an idea peculiar to Jesus. Jesus was not a dualist, for to him everything tended to a concrete realisation; he had not the least notion of a soul separated from the body. But he was a perfect idealist, matter being to him only the outward manifestation of the idea, and the real, the living expression of that which is invisible.

To whom should we turn, in whom should we trust to establish the kingdom of God? There was no doubt in the mind of Jesus on this point. That which is held in honour amongst men is abomination in the sight of God. The founders of the kingdom of God are the simple. Not the rich, not the learned, not priests; but women, common folk, the humble, little children.<sup>220</sup> The great sign of the Messiah's coming is that "the poor have the good tidings preached to them." It was the idyllic and gentle nature of Jesus that here resumed the upper hand. A great social revolution, in which distinctions of rank would be dissolved, in which all authority in this world would be humiliated,

<sup>218</sup> Matt. 10: 17, 18; Luke 12: 11.

<sup>219</sup> Matt. 5: 10-12; 10 throughout. Luke 6: 22, 23. John 15: 18-20; 6: 2-4, 20, 33; 17: 14.

<sup>220</sup> Matt. 5: 3, 10; 18: 3; 19: 14, 23, 24; 20: 16; 21: 31; 22: 2-14. Mark 10: 14, 15, 23-25. Luke 1: 51-53; 4: 18, 19; 6: 20; 13: 30; 14: 11; 18: 14, 16, 17, 24, 25.

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was his dream. The world was not to believe him; the world was to put him to death at last. But his disciples were not to be of this world.<sup>221</sup> They were to be a little flock of humble and simple folk, who would conquer by their very humility. The idea which has made "worldly" the antithesis of "Christian" was fully justified in the thoughts of the Master.<sup>222</sup>

<sup>221</sup> John 15: 19; 17: 14, 16.

<sup>222</sup> See, above all, John 17, which contains, not a real discourse spoken by Jesus, but a sentiment profoundly felt by his disciples, which flowed legitimately from his teaching.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *Jesus at Capernaum*

We shall find that Jesus, possessed by an idea that gradually grows more and more imperiously exclusive, will proceed henceforth with a kind of fatal impassibility along the path marked out by his astonishing genius and the extraordinary circumstances in which he lived. Hitherto he had only confided his thoughts to a few persons secretly attracted to him; henceforward his teaching was given in public and drew popular attention. He was about thirty years of age.<sup>223</sup> The little group of hearers which had accompanied him to John the Baptist had increased no doubt, and perhaps some of John's disciples had attached themselves to him.<sup>224</sup> It was with this first nucleus of a Church that he boldly announced, on his return to Galilee, the "good tidings of the kingdom of God." This kingdom was at hand, and it was he, Jesus, who was that "Son of man" whom Daniel in his vision had beheld as the divine herald of the last and supreme revelation.

It must be remembered that in Jewish ideas, which were opposed to art and mythology, the simple form of man had a superiority over those of the *cherubim* and fantastic animals which the imagination of the people, since it had been under Assyrian influence, had ranged around the Divine Majesty. Already, in Ezekiel,<sup>225</sup> the Being seated on

<sup>223</sup> Luke 3: 23; Ebionite Gospel (Epiphanius *Adv. hær.* 30: 13); Valentinus (*Irenæus Adv. hær.* 1, 1: 3; 2, 22: 1, 2. Epiphanius *ibid.* 51: 28, 29.) John 8: 57 has no bearing here, "fifty years" being a general expression of age. Irenæus (*ibid.* 22: 5, 6) does little more than echo John, though claiming to rest on the tradition of the "elders" of Asia.

<sup>224</sup> John 1: 37-43.

<sup>225</sup> Chap. 1: 5, 26-28.

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the supreme throne, far above the monsters of the mysterious chariot, the great revealer of prophetic visions, has the figure of a man. In the book of Daniel, in the midst of the vision of the empires, represented by animals, at the moment when the great judgment begins and the books are being opened, a Being "like unto a Son of man" advances towards the Ancient of Days, who bestows on him power to judge the world and govern it for eternity. "Son of man," in the Semitic languages, especially in the Aramean dialects, is a simple synonym of "man." But this important passage in Daniel impressed men's minds; the words, "Son of man," became, at least in certain schools of thought,<sup>226</sup> one of the titles of the Messiah, regarded as judge of the world, and king of the new era about to be inaugurated.<sup>227</sup> The application which Jesus made of it to himself was therefore the proclamation of his Messiahship, and the affirmation of the coming catastrophe in which he was to act as judge, clad with the full powers delegated to him by the Ancient of Days.

The success of the new prophet's teaching was now decisive. A group of men and women, all characterised by

<sup>226</sup> In John 12: 34 the Jews appear unfamiliar with this meaning of the phrase.

<sup>227</sup> Matt. 10: 23; 13: 41; 16: 27, 28; 19: 28; 24: 27, 30, 37, 39, 44; 25: 31; 26: 64. Mark 13: 26; 14: 62. Luke 12: 40; 17: 24, 26, 30; 21: 27, 36; 22: 69. Acts 7: 55. But the most decisive passage is John 5: 27 ["He hath given him authority to exercise judgment also, *because he is the Son of Man*"], when put beside Rev. 1: 13 and 14: 14. Compare Book of Enoch 46: 1-4; 48: 2, 3; 62: 5, 7, 9, 14; 69: 26, 27, 29; 70: 1 (Dillmann's arrangement): also 4 Esdras 13: 2 *et seq.*, 12, 13, 25, 32 (Ethiopic, Arabic, and Syriac versions, eds. of Ewald, Volkmar, and Ceriani), Ascension of Isaiah (Venetian Latin text of 1522, col. 702, Migne's ed.), and Justin, *Tryph.*, 49, 76. The expression "Son of woman," denoting the Messiah, is found once in Enoch 62: 5. It is to be remarked that the entire passage of Enoch, chapters 62 to 71, is suspected to be interpolated. The Fourth Book of Esdras was written in the reign of Nerva [A.D. 68], by a Jew under the influence of Christian ideas.

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the same spirit of childish frankness and simple innocence, adhered to him, and said, "Thou art the Messiah." As the Messiah was to be the son of David, they naturally endowed him with this title, which was synonymous with the former. Jesus willingly allowed it to be given to him, although it might cause him some embarrassment, his birth being well known. The name which he himself preferred was that of "Son of man," an apparently humble title, but one directly connected with Messianic hopes. It was by this title that he designated himself, to such an extent indeed that on his lips "Son of man"<sup>228</sup> was synonymous with the pronoun I, the use of which he avoided. But he was never thus addressed, doubtless because the name in question was destined to be fully applicable to him only on the day of his future appearance.

The centre of his operations at this epoch of his life was the little town of Capernaum, situated on the shore of the Lake of Genesareth. The name of Capernaum, of which the word *caphar*, "village," forms a part, seems to designate a small old-fashioned town, as opposed to the large towns built on the Roman system, like Tiberias.<sup>229</sup> Its name was so little known, that Josephus, in one passage in his writings,<sup>230</sup> takes it for the name of a fountain, the fountain being of greater celebrity than the village standing near it. Like Nazareth, Capernaum had no history, and had in no way participated in the profane movement favoured by the Herods. Jesus was much attached to the

<sup>228</sup> It occurs 83 times in the Gospels, always in his own discourses.

<sup>229</sup> It is true that Tell-Hum, commonly identified with Capernaum, shows some ruins of quite handsome monuments; but the identification is doubtful, and these may belong to the second or third century after Christ.

<sup>230</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 3, 10: 8.

<sup>231</sup> Matt. 9: 1. Mark 2: 1. Capernaum appears in the Talmud as the town of heretics (*minim*), who are here evidently Christians. Midrash, *Kohelleth* (Eccl.), 7: 26.



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town and made it a second home.<sup>231</sup> Soon after his return he had attempted to begin his work at Nazareth,<sup>232</sup> but without success. He could not perform any miracle there, as one of his biographers naïvely remarks.<sup>233</sup> The fact that his family, which was of humble rank, was known in the district lessened his authority too much. People could not regard as the son of David one whose brother, sister, and brother-in-law they saw every day; and it is moreover remarkable that his family were strongly opposed to him, and flatly declined to believe in his mission.<sup>234</sup> On one occasion his mother and his brothers maintained that he was out of his mind, and sought to arrest him by force.<sup>235</sup> The Nazarenes, who were still more violent, wished, it is said, to kill him by throwing him from a steep cliff.<sup>236</sup> Jesus aptly remarked that this treatment was the common fate of all great men, and applied to himself the proverb, "No man is a prophet in his own country."

This check far from discouraged him. He returned to Capernaum,<sup>237</sup> where he was much more favourably received, and from there he organised a series of missions among the little towns in the neighbourhood. The people of this beautiful and fertile country scarcely ever assembled together except on the Sabbath. This was the day which he chose for his teaching. At that time each town had its synagogue, or place of meeting. This was a rather small rectangular room, with a portico, decorated in the Greek

<sup>232</sup> Matt. 13: 54-58; Mark 6: 1-6; Luke 4: 16-30; John 4: 44.

<sup>233</sup> Mark 6: 5; comp. Matt. 13: 58; Luke 4: 23.

<sup>234</sup> Matt. 13: 57; Mark 6: 4; John 7: 3-5.

<sup>235</sup> Mark 3: 21, 31-35, noting the connection of the verses 20, 21, 31, even if we read in 31 *καὶ ἔρχονται* instead of *ἔρχονται οὖν*.

<sup>236</sup> This is probably the sharp cliff near Nazareth, above the present Maronite church; not the so-called "mount of precipitation," at an hour's distance from Nazareth (see Robinson, 2: 335 *et seq.*).

<sup>237</sup> Matt. 4: 13; Luke 4: 31; John 2: 12.

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style. The Jews, having no distinctive architecture of their own, never troubled to give these edifices an original style. The remains of many ancient synagogues still exist in Galilee.<sup>238</sup> They are all constructed of large and good materials; but their style is somewhat tawdry, in consequence of the profusion of floral ornaments, foliage, and twisted decorative work which characterises Jewish buildings.<sup>239</sup> In the interior there were seats, a pulpit for public reading, and a closet to contain the sacred rolls.<sup>240</sup> These edifices, which had none of the characteristics of a temple, were the centres of the whole of Jewish life. There the people gathered together on the Sabbath for prayer, and the reading of the Law and the Prophets. As Judaism, except in Jerusalem, had, properly speaking, no clergy, the first comer stood up and read the lessons of the day (*parasha* and *haphtara*), adding thereto a *midrash*, or entirely personal commentary, in which he unfolded his own ideas.<sup>241</sup> This was the origin of the "homily," the finished model of which we find in the short treatises of Philo. Those present had the right of raising objections and putting questions to the reader; so that the meeting soon

<sup>238</sup> At Tell-Hum, Irbid (Arbela), Meiron (Mero), Jisch (Gischala), Kasyoun, Nabartein; two at Kefr-Bereim.

<sup>239</sup> I do not as yet venture to pronounce on the age of these monuments, or, consequently, to assert that Jesus taught in any of them. On such a supposition, what interest there would be in the synagogue of Tell-Hum! The great synagogue of Kefr-Bereim seems to me the oldest of all; it is in quite a pure style. That of Kasyoun has a Greek inscription of the time of Septimius Severus. The great importance of Judaism in upper Galilee after the war of Hadrian leads us to think that many of these edifices are not of earlier date than the third century, when Tiberias became a sort of Jewish capital. (See *Journ. Asiat.*, December, 1864, p. 531 *et seq.*)

<sup>240</sup> Esdras 8: 4; Matt. 23: 6. Mishna, *Magilla*, 3: 1; *Rosch hasschana*, 4: 7, etc. See, especially, the curious description of the synagogue at Alexandria in the Babylonian Talmud, *Sukka*, 51 b.

<sup>241</sup> Philo in Euseb., *Præp. evang.* 8: 7; *quod omnis probus liber*, 12. Luke 4: 16. Acts 13: 15; 15: 21. Mishna, *Magilla*, 3: 4.

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degenerated into a meeting for free discussion.<sup>242</sup> It had a president (ἀρχισυνάγωγος), "elders" (πρεσβύτεροι), a recognized reader or apparitor (ὑπηρέτης *hazzan*), deputies (ἄγγελοι or ἀπόστολοι), a sort of secretaries or messengers who conducted the correspondence between the different synagogues, and a sacristan (διάκονος, *scham-masch*).<sup>243</sup> Thus the synagogues were really little independent republics, which had an extensive jurisdiction, undertook the responsibility of enfranchisement, and supervised those enfranchised.<sup>244</sup> Like all municipal corporations, up to an advanced period of the Roman empire, they issued honorary decrees,<sup>245</sup> voted resolutions, which had legal force for the community, and ordained corporal punishments, which were generally carried out by the *hazzan*.<sup>246</sup>

With the extreme activity of mind which has always characterised the Jews, such an institution, despite the arbitrary rigours it tolerated, could not fail to give rise to very lively discussions. Thanks to the synagogues, Judaism has been able to maintain its integrity through eighteen centuries of persecution. They were like so many little worlds apart, which preserved the national spirit and offered a field for intestine struggles. A large amount of passion was expended in them; quarrels for precedence

<sup>242</sup> See Garucci, *Dissert. archeol.* 2: 161 *et seq.*

<sup>243</sup> Mark 5: 22, 35. Luke 4: 20; 7: 3; 8: 41, 49; 23: 14. Acts 13: 15; 18: 8, 17. Rev. 2: 4. Mishna, *Joma*, 7: 1. *Rosch hasschana*, 4: 9. Jerusalem Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 1: 7. Epiph. *Adv. hær.* 30: 4, 11.

<sup>244</sup> *Antiq. du Bosph. Cimm.* inscr. 22, 23; *Mélanges gréco-lat.* of the St. Petersburg Academ., 2: 200. Lévy. *Epigraphische Beiträge zur Geschichte der Juden*, 273, 298.

<sup>245</sup> Inscr. of Berenice, in the *Corpus inscr. Græc.* No. 5361; inscr. of Kasyoun, in *Journal Asiatique*, l. c.

<sup>246</sup> Matt. 5: 25; 10: 17; 23: 34. Mark 13: 9. Luke 12: 11; 21: 12. Acts 22: 19; 26: 11. 2 Cor. 11: 24. Mishna, *Maccoth*, 3: 12. Babylonian Talmud, *Magilla*, 7 b; Epiph. *Adv. hær.* 30: 11.

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were hotly contested. To have a seat of honour in the front row was the reward of great piety, or the most envied privilege of wealth.<sup>247</sup> On the other hand, the liberty, accorded to every one who cared to have it, of instituting himself reader and commentator of the sacred text, afforded marvellous facilities for the propagation of new ideas. This was one of the great instruments of power wielded by Jesus, and his most customary method of propounding his doctrinal instruction.<sup>248</sup> He entered the synagogue and stood up to read; the *hazzan* offered him the book, he unrolled it, and reading the *parasha*, or *haphtara* of the day, he drew from this reading some development in harmony with his own ideas.<sup>249</sup> As there were few Pharisees in Galilee, the discussion did not assume that degree of intensity and tone of acrimony against him which at Jerusalem would have arrested his progress at the outset. These good Galileans had never heard preaching so well adapted to their cheerful imaginations.<sup>250</sup> They admired him, they encouraged him, they found that he spoke well and that his reasons were convincing. He confidently answered the most difficult objections; the almost poetical harmony of his discourses won the affections of those people, whose simple minds had not yet been withered by the pedantry of the doctors.

The authority of the young master thus continued to increase day by day, and naturally the more that people believed in him, the more he believed in himself. His sphere of action was very narrow. It was wholly confined to the valley of the Lake of Tiberias; and even in this valley there was one region which he preferred. The Lake

<sup>247</sup> Matt. 23: 6. James 2: 3. Babylonian Talmud, *Sukka*, 51 b.

<sup>248</sup> Matt. 4: 33; 9: 35. Mark 1: 21, 39; 6: 2. Luke 4: 15, 16, 31, 44; 13: 10. John 18: 20.

<sup>249</sup> Luke 4: 16-20; cf. Mishna, *Joma*, 7: 1.

<sup>250</sup> Matt. 7: 28; 13: 54. Mark 1: 22; 6: 1. Luke 4: 22, 32.

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is fifteen or sixteen miles long and nine or ten broad. Although it presents the appearance of an almost perfect oval, it forms a kind of gulf commencing from Tiberias up to the entrance of the Jordan, the curve of which measures about nine miles. Such was the field in which the seed sown by Jesus at last found a well-prepared soil. Let us go over it step by step, and try to imagine how it looked before it was covered with the mantle of aridity and mourning cast upon it by the evil spirit of Islamism.

On leaving Tiberias, we at first find steep cliffs forming a mountain which seems to plunge into the sea. Then the mountains gradually recede; a plain (El Ghoueir) opens almost on a level with the lake. It is a delightful wood of rich verdure, furrowed by numerous streams which partly flow from a great round basin of ancient construction (Ain-Medawara). On the border of this plain, which is, properly speaking, the country of Genesareth, is the miserable village of Medjdel. At the other end of the plain, still following the coast-line, we come upon the site of a town (Khan-Minyeh), with very beautiful streams (Ain-et-Tin), and a pretty road, narrow and deep, cut out of the rock, which Jesus must often have trod, serving as a passage between the plain of Genesareth and the northern slopes of the lake. A quarter of an hour's journey from here we cross a stream of salt water (Ain-Tabiga) issuing from the earth by several large springs at a little distance from the lake, and flowing into it in the midst of a dense mass of verdure. At last, after forty minutes' further walking, we find upon the arid declivity which extends from Ain-Tabiga to the mouth of the Jordan, a few huts and a collection of monumental ruins, called Tell-Houm.

Five little towns, the names of which mankind will remember as long as those of Rome and Athens, were standing in the time of Jesus, in the district which extends from

the village of Medjdel to Tell-Houm. Of these five towns, Magdala, Dalmanutha, Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Chorazin, the first alone can be identified at the present time with any certainty.<sup>251</sup> The repulsive village of Medjdel has no doubt kept the name and site of the little town which gave to Jesus his most faithful friend.<sup>252</sup> The site of Dalmanutha is quite unknown.<sup>253</sup> It is possible that Chorazin was a little further inland, to the north of the lake.<sup>254</sup> As to Bethsaida and Capernaum, it is in truth almost at hazard that they have been placed at Tell-Houm, Ain-et-Tin, Khan-Minyeh, or Ain-Medawara.<sup>255</sup> We might imagine that in topography, as well as in history, there has been some profound design purposely concealing the traces of the great founder. It is doubtful whether we shall ever succeed throughout this district of utter devastation in ascertaining the places to which mankind would gladly come to kiss the imprint of his feet.

The lake, the horizon, the shrubs, the flowers, are all that remain of the little district, three or four leagues in extent, where Jesus initiated his divine work. The trees

<sup>251</sup> The ancient Kinnereth [Gennesareth] has disappeared or changed its name.

<sup>252</sup> Magdala is known to have been close to Tiberias: Jerusalem Talmud, *Maasaroth*, 3: 1; *Schebiit*, 9: 1; *Erubin*, 5: 7.

<sup>253</sup> Mark 8: 10. In the parallel passage (Matt. 15: 39) the common reading is *Μαγδαλ*; but this is a late alteration from the true reading *Μαλαδων* (p. 151, note, below). *ΜΑΛΛΑΔΑΝ* seems to be an alteration for *ΔΑΑΜΑΝ ουθα* (see *Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des inscr. et belles lettres*, Aug. 17, 1866). Right upon the Jordan, about five miles below its outflow from the lake, there is an ancient locality called *Dalhamia* or *Dalmamia* (see Thomson, "The Land and the Book," 2: 60, 61, and Van de Velde's map). But Mark 8: 10 assumes Dalmanutha to be on the lake shore.

<sup>254</sup> At the place called *Khorazi* or *Bir-Kerazeh*, above Tell-Hum (Van de Velde's map, and Thomson, 2: 13).

<sup>255</sup> The old theory identifying Tell-Hum with Capernaum, though of late strongly opposed, still has many defenders. The best argument in its favor is the name itself; since *Tell* is found in the name of many villages, or may have taken the place of *Caphar* (see an instance in the



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have totally disappeared. In this country, in which vegetation was formerly so luxuriant that Josephus saw in it a kind of miracle—nature, according to him, being pleased to bring hither, side by side, the plants of cold countries, the growths of the torrid zone, and the trees of temperate climates, laden all the year with flowers and fruits <sup>256</sup>—in this country travellers are now obliged to calculate a day beforehand the spot where they are next to find a shady resting-place. The lake has become deserted. A single craft in the most miserable condition now crosses the waves that were once so rich in life and joy. But the waters are still clear and transparent.<sup>257</sup> The shore, composed of rocks and pebbles, is that of a little sea, not that of a pond, like the shores of Lake Huleh. It is clean, dainty, free from mud, and always beaten in the same place by the light movement of the waves. Small promontories, covered with rose-laurels, tamarisks, and thorny caper bushes, are to be seen; in two places especially, at the mouth of the Jordan, near Tarichea, and on the border of the plain of Genesareth, there are beautiful gardens where the waves ebb and flow through masses of turf and flowers. The rivulet of Ain-Tabiga makes a little estuary, full of pretty shells. Bevvies of aquatic birds cover the lake. The horizon dazzles one with its intense light. The waters, of an empyrean

*Archives des missions scientifiques*, 2d ser. 3: 369). On the other hand, near Tell-Hum no spring can be found answering to the account of Josephus (*Wars*, 3, 10: 8). This spring at Capernaum might seem to be *Ain-Medawara*; but this is half a league from the lake, while Capernaum is a fishing-village on the water front (*Matt.* 4: 13; *John* 6: 17). The case of Bethsaida is still more perplexing; for the generally admitted theory of two Bethsaidas on opposite sides of the lake, eight or nine miles apart, is rather forced.

<sup>256</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 3, 10: 8. Babylonian Talmud, *Pesachim*, 8 b; Siphre, *Vezoth habberaka*.

<sup>257</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 3, 10: 7. Jacob of Vitry [a French ecclesiastic, assailant of the Albigenses, and agent of a charitable mission in Palestine about 1200], *Gesta Dei per Francos*, 1: 1075.

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blue, deeply imbedded amid burning rocks, seem, when viewed from the height of the mountains of Safed, to lie at the bottom of a golden cup. On the north, the snowy ravines of Hermon stretch in white lines along the sky; on the ~~west~~<sup>East</sup>, the high undulating plateaus of Gaulonitis and Perea, absolutely barren and clad by the sun with a kind of soft haze, form one compact mountain, or rather a long and very lofty ridge, which from Cæsarea Philippi runs indefinitely towards the south.

The heat on the shore is now very oppressive. The lake lies in a hollow six hundred and fifty feet below the level of the Mediterranean,<sup>258</sup> and thus shares the torrid conditions of the Dead Sea. An abundant vegetation formerly tempered this excessive heat; it would be difficult to understand how a furnace, such as the whole lake valley is at the present day, from the beginning of the month of May, can have ever been the scene of great activity. Josephus however considered the country very temperate.<sup>259</sup> There can be no doubt that here, as in the Campagna of Rome, there has been a change of climate brought about by historical causes. It is Islamism, and especially the Mussulman reaction against the Crusades, which has withered as with a blast of death the land beloved by Jesus. The people of this beautiful country of Genesareth never suspected that behind the brow of this peaceful wayfarer its highest destinies were being determined. Jesus was a dangerous fellow-countryman; for he was fatal to the land which had the portentous glory of bearing him. Having become the object of universal love or hate, coveted by two rival fa-

<sup>258</sup> This is the reckoning of M. Vogues (*Connaissance des temps* for 1866), closely agreeing with that of Captain Lynch (in Ritter, *Erdkunde*, 15: pt. 1, p. 20) and that of Bertou (*Bulletin de la Société de géographie* ser. 2, 12: 146). The depression of the Dead Sea is more than twice as much.

<sup>259</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 3, 10: 7, 8.

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naticisms, Galilee, as the price of its fame, has been transformed into a desert. But who would say that Jesus would have been happier had he lived a life of obscurity in his village to the full age of man? And who would bestow a thought on these ungrateful Nazarenes, had not one of them, at the risk of compromising the future of their town, recognised his Father and proclaimed himself the Son of God?

Four of five large villages, lying at half-an-hour's journey from one another, formed the little world of Jesus at the time of which we speak. He does not appear to have ever visited Tiberias, a city inhabited for the most part by Pagans, and the usual residence of Antipas.<sup>260</sup> Sometimes, however, he wandered beyond his favourite region. He went by boat to the eastern shore, to Gergesa for instance.<sup>261</sup> Towards the north we see him at Paneas or Cæsarea Philippi, at the foot of Mount Hermon.<sup>262</sup> And lastly, he journeyed once in the direction of Tyre and Sidon,<sup>263</sup> a country which must have been marvellously prosperous at that time. In all these districts he was in the midst of paganism.<sup>264</sup> At Cæsarea he saw the celebrated

<sup>260</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 3: 2; *Life*, 12, 13, 64.

<sup>261</sup> I follow Thomson (*The Land and the Book*, 2: 34) in assuming Gergasa (Matt. 8: 28) to be the same with the Canaanite town Girgash (Gen. 10: 16 and 15: 21; Deut. 7: 1; Josh. 24: 11), and the spot now called *Kersa* or *Gersa*, on the eastern shore, nearly opposite Magdala. Mark 5: 1 and Luke 8: 26 give the name "Gadara" or "Gerasa" instead of "Gergesa." Gerasa is out of the question, since the Gospels show that the town was near the lake and opposite Galilee. As to Gadara (now *Om-Keis*), an hour and a half from the lake and the Jordan, the local circumstances given by Mark and Luke do not admit it. We understand, too, how "Gergasa" may have become "Gerasa," a name better known; and how the topographical difficulties thus raised suggested Gadara. (Cf. Origen *Comm. in Joann.* 6: 24; 10: 10. Eusebius and Jerome, *De situ et nominibus locorum hebræorum* Γεργέσα, Γεργασεί.)

<sup>262</sup> Matt. 16: 13; Mark 8: 27.

<sup>263</sup> Matt. 15: 21; Mark 7: 24, 31.

<sup>264</sup> Josephus, *Life*, 13.

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grotto of Panium, thought to be the source of the Jordan, and associated in popular belief with weird legends; <sup>265</sup> he could admire the marble temple which Herod had erected near there in honour of Augustus; <sup>266</sup> he probably paused before the numerous votive statues to Pan, to the Nymphs, to the Echo of the Grotto, which piety had already begun to accumulate in this beautiful place. <sup>267</sup> A rationalistic Jew, accustomed to take strange gods for deified men or for demons, must have considered all these figurative representations as idols. The charm of nature worship, which seduced more sensitive nations, never affected him. He was doubtless ignorant of what traces of a primitive worship, more or less analogous to that of the Jews, the ancient sanctuary of Melkarth, at Tyre, might still contain. <sup>268</sup> The paganism which, in Phœnicia, had raised on every hill a temple and a sacred grove, and the general aspect of great industry and profane wealth, must have had little charm in his eyes. <sup>269</sup> Monotheism deprives men of all appreciation of the pagan religions; the Mussulman, who visits polytheistic countries, seems to have no eyes. Jesus assuredly learnt nothing in these journeys. He returned always to his well-beloved shore of Genesareth. The mother-land of his thoughts was there; there he found faith and love.

<sup>265</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 15, 10: 3; *Wars*, 1, 21: 3; 3, 10: 7. Benjamin of Tudela, p. 46 (ed. Asher).

<sup>266</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 15, 10: 3; *Wars*, 1, 21: 3. Comp. the coins of Philip (Madden, *Hist. of Jewish Coinage*, p. 101 *et seq.*).

<sup>267</sup> *Corp. inscr. græc.*, 4537, 4538, 4538 b, 4539. These inscriptions, it is true, are mostly of quite modern date.

<sup>268</sup> Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 3.

<sup>269</sup> Traces of the rich pagan civilization of this period abound throughout the Beled-Besharrah, especially on the heights which form the promontories Blanco and Nakura.

## CHAPTER IX

### *The Disciples of Jesus*

In this earthly paradise, which the great revolutions of history had, up to that period, scarcely touched, lived a population in perfect harmony with the land itself, active, honest, joyous, and tender of heart. The Lake of Tiberias is one of the richest fishing-grounds in the world;<sup>270</sup> very productive fisheries had been established, especially at Bethsaida and Capernaum, and had produced a certain degree of wealth. The fishermen and their families formed a population of gentle and peaceable folk, extending by numerous ties of relationship through the whole lake district which we have described. Their comparatively easy life left entire freedom to their imagination. Ideas about the kingdom of God found in these small communities of worthy people more credence than anywhere else. Nothing of what is called civilisation, in the Greek and worldly sense, had reached them. Neither was there any of our Teutonic and Celtic earnestness; but, although goodness amongst them was often superficial and without depth, they were quiet in their habits and had a certain intelligence and shrewdness. We may imagine them as somewhat similar to the better parts of the population of the Lebanon, but with the gift, which the latter do not possess, of producing great men. Here Jesus found his true family. He settled in their midst as one of them; Capernaum became "his own city";<sup>271</sup> in the centre of the little circle which adored him,

<sup>270</sup> Matt. 4: 18; Luke 5: 4-9; John 1: 44 and 21: 1-8. Josephus, *Wars*, 3, 10: 70; Jerusalem Talmud, *Pesachim*, 4: 2; Babylonian Talmud, *Baba kama*, 80 b; Jacobus de Vitry, *Gesta*, etc., 1: 1075.

<sup>271</sup> Matt. 9: 1; Mark 2: 1, 2.

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his sceptical brothers and ungrateful Nazareth, with its mocking incredulity, were forgotten.

One house above all at Capernaum offered him a pleasant refuge and devoted disciples. It was that of two brothers, both sons of a certain Jonas, who probably was dead at the time when Jesus came to live on the shores of the lake. These two brothers were Simon, surnamed *Cephas*, "a stone" in Syro-Chaldaic, in Greek *Petros*,<sup>272</sup> and Andrew. Born at Bethsaida,<sup>273</sup> they were settled at Capernaum when Jesus began his public life. Peter was married and had children; his mother-in-law lived with him.<sup>274</sup> Jesus loved his house and dwelt in it habitually.<sup>275</sup> Andrew appears to have been a disciple of John the Baptist, and Jesus may possibly have known him on the banks of the Jordan.<sup>276</sup> The two brothers always continued, even during the period in which apparently they must have been most occupied with their Master, to follow their employment as fishermen.<sup>277</sup> Jesus, who was fond of playing upon words, said at times that he would make them fishers of men.<sup>278</sup> Amongst all his disciples indeed he had none more devotedly attached to him.

Another family, that of Zabdia or Zebedee, a well-to-do fisherman and owner of several boats,<sup>279</sup> gave Jesus a warm

<sup>272</sup> The surname *Κηφᾶς* is apparently the same with *Καῖφας*, that of the high-priest, Joseph Caiaphas. The name *Πέτρος* is found in Josephus (*Antiq.*, 18, 6: 3) as the proper name of a contemporary. We are thus led to think that Jesus did not bestow upon him this epithet, but rather gave emphasis to the name which his disciple already had.

<sup>273</sup> John 1: 44.

<sup>274</sup> Matt. 8: 14; Mark 1: 30; Luke 4: 38; 1 Cor. 9: 5; 1 Pet. 5: 13. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 3: 6 and 7: 11; Pseudo-Clem. *Recogn.* 7: 25; Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3: 30.

<sup>275</sup> Matt. 8: 14 and 17: 24; Mark 1: 29-31; Luke 4: 38.

<sup>276</sup> John 1: 40, 41.

<sup>277</sup> Matt. 4: 18; Mark 1: 16; Luke 5: 3; John 21: 3.

<sup>278</sup> Matt. 4: 19; Mark 1: 17; Luke 5: 10.

<sup>279</sup> Mark 1: 20; Luke 5: 10 and 8: 3; John 19: 27.



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welcome. Zebedee had two sons: the elder was James, the younger, John, who later was destined to play a very prominent part in the history of infant Christianity. Both were zealous disciples. From certain indications, it would seem that John, like Andrew, had known Jesus when in company with John the Baptist.<sup>280</sup> In any case the two families of Jonas and Zebedee appear to have been closely united.<sup>281</sup> Salome, wife of Zebedee, was also greatly attached to Jesus, and accompanied him until his death.<sup>282</sup>

Women, in fact, received him eagerly. He manifested towards them the reserved manners which make a very sweet union of ideas possible between the two sexes. The separation of men from women, which has precluded all progress in refinement among the Semitic peoples, was no doubt then, as in our own days, much less rigorous in the rural districts and villages than in the larger towns. Three or four devoted Galilean women always accompanied the young Master, and disputed among themselves the pleasure of listening to him and tending him in turn.<sup>283</sup> They brought into the new sect an element of enthusiasm and taste for the marvellous, the importance of which had already begun to be understood. One of them, Mary of Magdala, who has given such a world-wide celebrity to that poor town, appears to have been of a very ardent temperament. According to the language of the time, she had been possessed by seven demons<sup>284</sup>—that is, she had suffered from nervous and apparently inexplicable maladies. Jesus, by his pure and sweet beauty, calmed her troubled nature.

<sup>280</sup> John 1: 35-37. The mysterious way in which John is always spoken of in the Fourth Gospel seems to show that one of the disciples here unnamed is John himself.

<sup>281</sup> Matt. 4: 19; Mark 1: 17; Luke 5: 10.

<sup>282</sup> Matt. 27: 56; Mark 15: 40; 16: 1.

<sup>283</sup> Matt. 27: 55, 56; Mark 15: 40, 41; Luke 8: 2, 3, and 23: 49.

<sup>284</sup> Mark 16: 9; Luke 8: 2. Cf. Tobit 3: 8; 6: 14.

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The Magdalene was faithful to him, even unto Golgotha, and on the day but one after his death played a leading part; for, as we shall see later, she was the principal agent by which faith in the resurrection was established. Joanna, wife of Chuza one of the stewards of Antipas, Susanna, and others who have remained unknown, followed him constantly and ministered to his wants.<sup>285</sup> Some were rich, and by their wealth enabled the young prophet to live without following the trade which, until then, he had practised.<sup>286</sup>

Many others made a practice of following him about, and acknowledged him as their Master;—a certain Philip of Bethsaida; Nathanael, son of Tolmaï or Ptolemy, of Cana, a disciple of the first period;<sup>287</sup> and Matthew, probably to be identified with the Matthew who was the Xenophon of infant Christianity. He had, according to tradition, been a tax-collector,<sup>288</sup> and as such doubtless handled the pen (*kalam*) more easily than the others. Perhaps it was this that suggested to him the idea of writing the discourses (*logia*) which form the basis of what we know of the teachings of Jesus. Among the disciples are also mentioned Thomas or Didymus,<sup>289</sup> who was sometimes sceptical, but apparently a man of warm heart and of generous impulses;<sup>290</sup> one Lebbæus or Thaddeus; Simon the Zealot,<sup>291</sup> who was perhaps a disciple of Judas the Gaulonite, and belonged to the party of the *Kenaim*, which was formed about that time and was soon to play so great a

<sup>285</sup> Luke 8: 3; 24: 10.

<sup>286</sup> Luke 8: 3.

<sup>287</sup> John 1: 44-47; 21: 2. Nathanael may be plausibly identified with the apostle who appears in the lists as Bartholomew (Bar-Tolmai, or Bar-Tholomæus).

<sup>288</sup> Matt. 9: 9; 10: 3.

<sup>289</sup> Didymus (*twain*, or *twin*) is the Greek rendering of Thomas.

<sup>290</sup> John 11: 14; 20: 24-29.

<sup>291</sup> Matt. 10: 4; Mark 3: 18; Luke 6: 15; Acts 1: 43; Ebionite Gospel (Epiph. *Adv. hæres.* 30: 13).

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part in the movements of the Jewish people; Joseph Barsabas, surnamed "the Just"; Matthias;<sup>292</sup> a problematical person called Aristion;<sup>293</sup> and lastly, Judas, son of Simon, of the town of Kerioth, who was the exception in the faithful flock, and drew upon himself so terrible a notoriety. He was the only one who was not a Galilean. Kerioth was a town at the extreme south of the tribe of Judah, a day's journey beyond Hebron.<sup>294</sup>

We have seen that on the whole the family of Jesus had little affection for him.<sup>295</sup> James and Jude, however, his cousins by Mary Cleophas, became his disciples henceforth,<sup>296</sup> and Mary Cleophas herself was one of those friends who followed him to Calvary.<sup>297</sup> At this period we do not see his mother beside him. It was only after the death of Jesus that Mary acquired great importance,<sup>298</sup> and that the disciples sought to attach her to them.<sup>299</sup> It was then, too, that the members of the founder's family, under the name of "brothers of the Lord," formed an influential group, which for a long time headed the church of Jerusalem,<sup>300</sup> and, after the sack of the city, took refuge in Batanea.<sup>301</sup> The simple fact of having been familiar with

<sup>292</sup> Acts 1: 21-23; cf. Papias (Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3: 39).

<sup>293</sup> Papias (ibid.) calls him a disciple like the apostles, ascribes to him narrations respecting the discourses of Jesus, and associates him with "John the Elder." (See Introduction, p. 58.)

<sup>294</sup> Now Kuryetein, or Kereitein.

<sup>295</sup> The incident told in John 19: 25-27 [the adoption by John of the mother of Jesus] seems to imply that his own brothers stood aloof from him during all his public life. If we assume more than one James in the family circle, we may trace an allusion to the unfriendliness of "James the Lord's brother" in Galatians 2: 6, comparing 1: 19 and 2: 9, 11.

<sup>296</sup> See *ante*, p. 95.

<sup>297</sup> Matt. 27: 56; Mark 15: 40; John 19: 25.

<sup>298</sup> Acts 1: 14. Comp. Luke 1: 28; 2: 25, which already show great respect for Mary.

<sup>299</sup> John 19: 25-27.

<sup>300</sup> See *ante*, p. 95.

<sup>301</sup> Julius Africanus, in Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 1: 7.

him became a marked advantage, in the same manner as, after the death of Mahomet, the wives and daughters of the prophet, who had had no importance in his lifetime, became great authorities.

In this friendly group Jesus evidently had his favourites, and, so to speak, an inner circle. The two sons of Zebedee, James and John, seem to have been in the front rank. They were full of fire and passion. Jesus had aptly surnamed them "sons of thunder," on account of their excessive zeal, which, had it controlled the thunder, would have made use of it too often.<sup>302</sup> John especially appears to have been on familiar terms with Jesus. It may be that the disciples who gradually grouped themselves around the second son of Zebedee, and apparently wrote his memoirs in a manner that scarcely dissimulates the interests of the school, have exaggerated the warm affection which Jesus bore him.<sup>303</sup> The most significant fact however is that, in the synoptic Gospels, Simon Bar-Jonah or Peter, James son of Zebedee, and John his brother, form a sort of privy council, which Jesus summons at certain times, when he suspects the faith and intelligence of the others.<sup>304</sup> It seems, moreover, that they were all three associated in their trade as fishermen.<sup>305</sup> The affection of Jesus for Peter was very deep. The character of the latter—straightforward, sincere, impulsive—pleased Jesus, who at times permitted himself to smile at his headstrong manner. Peter, who was

<sup>302</sup> Mark 3: 17; 9: 37-39; 10: 35-40; and Luke 9: 49, 50, 54-56. The Apocalypse exhibits the same quality, especially in chaps. 2 and 3, in which personal animosity overflows. Compare the fanatic incident reported by Irenæus, *Adv. hæc.*, 3, 3: 4.

<sup>303</sup> John 8: 23; 18: 15; 19: 26; 27; 20: 2, 4; 21: 7, 20-24.

<sup>304</sup> Matt. 17: 1; 26: 37; Mark 5: 37; 9: 1; 13: 3; 14: 33; Luke 9: 28. A notion very early prevailed that Jesus had imparted to these three disciples a secret doctrine, a *gnosis*. It is remarkable that the Gospel ascribed to John never once mentions his brother James.

<sup>305</sup> Matt. 4: 18-22; Luke 5: 10; John 21: 2-8.

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little of a mystic, told the master his simple doubts, his prejudices, and his entirely human weaknesses,<sup>306</sup> with an honest frankness which recalls that of the Sieur de Joinville towards St. Louis. Jesus reproved him in a friendly way that showed his confidence and esteem. As to John, his youth, his enthusiasm, and his vivid imagination, must have had great charm.<sup>307</sup> The personality of this extraordinary man, who exerted so strong an influence on infant Christianity, only developed itself later. If he were not the author of the strange Gospel which bears his name, and, despite its erroneous ideas on many points in the character of Jesus, contains such priceless information, it is at least possible that he may have influenced its production. He was the biographer of Jesus, as Plato was of Socrates. Accustomed to shuffle his recollections with the fevered disquietude of an ecstatic soul, he transformed his Master while he believed he was describing him, thus furnishing clever forgers with the pretext of an alleged document, in the composition of which perfect good faith has apparently not been shown.

No hierarchy, properly speaking, existed in the new sect. They had all to call each other "brothers"; and Jesus absolutely forbade titles of superior rank, such as *rabbi*, master, father—he alone being Master, and God alone being Father.<sup>308</sup> The greatest among them ought to be the servant of the others. Simon Bar-Jonah, however, was distinguished amongst his fellows by a peculiar degree of importance. Jesus lived in his house and taught in his boat; <sup>309</sup> his home was the centre of Gospel preaching. By

<sup>306</sup> Matt. 14: 28; 16: 22. Mark 8: 32, 33.

<sup>307</sup> He appears to have lived till about A.D. 100. See John 21: 15-23, and the authorities in Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 3: 20, 23. The Apocalypse was probably written by him. (See note <sup>302</sup>.)

<sup>308</sup> Matt. 18: 4; 20: 25, 26; 23: 8-12. Mark 9: 34; 10: 42-46.

<sup>309</sup> Luke 5: 3.

outsiders he was regarded as the chief of the flock; and it was to him that the overseers of the tolls applied for the taxes which were due from the community.<sup>310</sup> He had been the first to recognise Jesus as the Messiah.<sup>311</sup> In a moment of unpopularity, Jesus asking of his disciples, "Would ye also go away?" Simon answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."<sup>312</sup> Jesus at various times granted him a certain priority in his church,<sup>313</sup> and gave him the Syrian surname of *Kephas* (stone), by which he wished to signify that he made him the corner-stone of the edifice.<sup>314</sup> At one time he seems even to promise him "the keys of the kingdom of heaven," and to grant him the right of pronouncing upon earth decisions which should always be ratified in eternity.<sup>315</sup>

There can be no doubt that this priority of Peter excited a little jealousy. Jealousy was especially kindled in view of the future, and of that kingdom of God in which all the disciples would be seated upon thrones, on the right and left of the Master, to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.<sup>316</sup> They asked themselves who would then be nearest to the Son of man, and act, so to speak, as his prime minister and assessor. The two sons of Zebedee aspired to this rank. Brooding over thoughts of this kind, they prompted their mother Salome, who one day took Jesus aside and asked him for the two places of honour for her sons.<sup>317</sup> Jesus evaded the request by his habitual maxim that he who ex-

<sup>310</sup> Matt. 17: 24.

<sup>311</sup> Matt. 16: 16, 17.

<sup>312</sup> John 6: 68-70.

<sup>313</sup> Matt. 10: 2; Luke 22: 32; John 21: 15-19; Acts 1: 2, 5 *et seq.*; Gal. 1: 18, and 2: 7, 8.

<sup>314</sup> Matt. 16: 18; John 1: 42.

<sup>315</sup> Matt. 16: 19. Elsewhere, it is true (Matt. 18: 18), the same power is given to all the apostles.

<sup>316</sup> Matt. 18: 1-4, 18-20; Mark 10: 35-40; Luke 9: 46; 22: 30.

<sup>317</sup> Matt. 20: 20-23; Mark 10: 35-44.



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alted himself should be humbled, and that the kingdom of heaven would be possessed by the lowly. This occasioned some talk in the community; and there was great murmuring against James and John.<sup>318</sup> The same rivalry seems to show itself in the Gospel of John, where the supposed narrator unceasingly declares himself to have been "the disciple whom Jesus loved," to whom the Master in dying confided his mother, and where he seeks to place himself near Simon Peter—at times to put himself before him on important occasions, in narrating which the older evangelists had omitted to mention his name.<sup>319</sup>

Among the preceding persons, all those of whom we know anything had begun by being fishermen. In a country of simple habits where every one worked, this employment was not of so extremely humble a nature as the rhetoric of preachers would make it, the better to display the miraculous origin of Christianity. But at all events, none of the disciples belonged to a high social class. Only a certain Levi, son of Alpheus, and perhaps the apostle Matthew, had been publicans.<sup>320</sup> But those to whom this name was given in Judæa were not the farmers-general of taxes, men of high rank (always Roman patricians) who were called at Rome *publicani*.<sup>321</sup> They were the agents of these farmers-general, employés of low rank, simply officers of the customs. The great route from Acre to Damascus, one

<sup>318</sup> Mark 10: 41.

<sup>319</sup> John 18: 15, 16; 19: 26, 27; 20: 2-4; 21: 7, 20, 21. Compare 1: 35-37, where one of the disciples not named is probably John.

<sup>320</sup> Matt. 9: 9; 10: 3; Mark 2: 14; 3: 18; Luke 5: 27; 6: 15; Acts 1: 13; Ebion. Gosp. in Epiph. 30: 13. The original account names "Levi son of Alphæus." The later compiler of the first Gospel substituted the name "Matthew," from a tradition of more or less weight that this apostle had exercised that charge (Matt. 10: 3). In the Gospel as it now stands, we must remember, the only part that can be from the apostle consists of the discourses of Jesus. (See Papias in Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3: 34.)

<sup>321</sup> Cicero, *De provinc. consul.* 5; *Pro Plancio* 9; Tacitus, *Ann.* 4: 6; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 12: 32; Appian, *Bell. civ.* 2: 13.

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of the most ancient trade routes of the world, which crossed Galilee, skirting the lake,<sup>322</sup> made employés of this kind very numerous there. At Capernaum, which was perhaps on the highroad, there was a numerous staff.<sup>323</sup> This profession is never popular, but among the Jews it was considered quite criminal. Taxation, being new to them, was the sign of their subjection; one party, that of Judas the Gaulonite, maintained that to pay it was an act of paganism. So too the customs officers were abhorred by the zealots of the Law. They were only classed with assassins, highway robbers, and people of abandoned life.<sup>324</sup> Jews who accepted such offices were excommunicated, and deprived of the right to make a will; their property was accursed, and the casuists forbade the changing of money with them.<sup>325</sup> These poor men, outcasts of society, had no social intercourse outside their own class. Jesus accepted a dinner offered him by Levi, at which there were, according to the language of the time, "many publicans and sinners." This caused grave scandal.<sup>326</sup> In these houses of ill-repute there was a risk of meeting bad society. We shall often see him thus, caring little if he shocked the prejudices of respectable people, seeking to raise the classes humiliated by the orthodox, and thus exposing himself to the

<sup>322</sup> It continued famous down to the time of the Crusades, under the name of the "Seaway" (*via maris*): cf. Isaiah 9: 1; Matt. 4: 13-15; Tobit 1: 1. The road cut in the rock near Ain-et-Tin, made (as I think) part of it, the highway thence turning toward the Bridge of the Daughters of Jacob, as to-day. Part of the road from Ain-et-Tin to this bridge is of ancient construction.

<sup>323</sup> Matt. 9: 9-13.

<sup>324</sup> Matt. 5: 46, 47; 9: 10, 11; 11: 19; 18: 17; 21: 31, 32. Mark 2: 15, 16. Luke 5: 30; 7: 34; 15: 1; 18: 2; 19: 7. Lucian, *Nekyomant*, 11. Dio Chrysost. *Orat.* 4: 85: 14: 269 (ed. Emperius). Mishna, *Nedarim*, 3: 4.

<sup>325</sup> Mishna, *Baba kama*, 10: 1; Jerusalem Talmud, *Demai*, 2: 3; Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 25 b.

<sup>326</sup> Luke 5: 29-32.

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most scathing reproaches of the devotees. The Pharisees had made endless observances and a species of external "respectability" the price of salvation. The true moralist who came proclaiming that God cares for one thing alone—righteousness in feeling, must of necessity have been welcomed with blessings by all souls that had escaped the corruption of official hypocrisy.

Jesus owed these numerous conquests to the infinite charm of his personality and speech. A searching phrase, a glance cast upon a simple conscience which only needed awakening, gave him an ardent disciple. Sometimes Jesus employed an innocent artifice which was also used by Joan of Arc: he affected to know something of the inner life of him whom he wished to gain, or else he would remind him of some circumstance dear to his heart. It was thus that he is said to have attracted Nathanael, Peter, and the woman of Samaria.<sup>327</sup> Concealing the true source of his power—his superiority over all those who surrounded him—he permitted people to believe (in order to satisfy the ideas of the time, ideas in which moreover he himself fully shared) that a revelation from on high revealed all secrets to him and laid open all hearts. Every one thought that Jesus lived in a sphere higher than that of humanity. It was said that he conversed on the mountains with Moses and Elijah;<sup>328</sup> it was believed that in his moments of solitude the angels came to give him homage, and establish a supernatural intercourse between him and heaven.<sup>329</sup>

<sup>327</sup> John 1: 42, 43, 48-50; 4: 17-19; cf. Mark 2: 8; 3: 2-4; John 2: 24, 25.

<sup>328</sup> Matt. 17: 3; Mark 9: 3; Luke 9: 30, 31.

<sup>329</sup> Matt. 4: 11; Mark 1: 13.

## CHAPTER X

### *Preaching by the Lake*

Such was the group which gathered around Jesus on the shores of the lake of Tiberias. In it the aristocracy was represented by a customs-officer and by the wife of one of Herod's stewards. The rest were fishermen and common folk. Their ignorance was extreme, their intelligence feeble; they believed in apparitions and spirits.<sup>330</sup> Not one element of Greek culture had reached this first assembly of the saints, and they were but little instructed in Jewish learning; but warmth of heart and good-will overflowed. The beautiful climate of Galilee made the life of these honest fishermen a constant delight. Simple, good, and happy as they were, they truly preluded the kingdom of God—rocked gently on their delightful little sea, or at night sleeping on its shores. We do not realise for ourselves the charm of a life which thus glides away under the open sky—the sweet and strong love given by this perpetual contact with nature, and the dreams of nights passed thus in the clear starlight under an azure dome of limitless expanse. It was on such a night that Jacob, with his head resting upon a stone, saw in the stars the promise of an innumerable posterity, and the mysterious ladder by which the Elohim came and went from heaven to earth. At the time of Jesus the heavens were not shut nor was the earth grown cold. The clouds still opened over the Son of man; the angels ascended and descended above his head (John 1: 51); vision of the kingdom of God was vouchsafed every-

<sup>330</sup> Matt. 14: 26; Mark 6: 49; Luke 24: 39; John 6: 19.

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where, for man carried it in his heart. These simple souls contemplated with clear and gentle gaze the universe in its ideal source. It may be that the world unveiled its secret to the divinely lucid conscience of these happy children, who by their purity of heart deserved one day to stand in God's presence.

Jesus lived with his disciples almost always in the open air. Sometimes he got into a boat, and from it taught his hearers, who were crowded upon the shore.<sup>331</sup> Sometimes he sat upon the mountains which border on the lake, where the air is pure and the horizon luminous. Thus the faithful band led a joyous wandering life, gathering the inspirations of the Master in their first bloom. Sometimes an innocent doubt was raised, a mildly sceptical question put; but Jesus, with a smile or a look, silenced the objection. At every step—in the passing cloud, the germinating seed, the ripening corn—they saw a sign of the kingdom drawing nigh, they believed themselves on the eve of seeing God, of being masters of the world; tears were turned into joy; it was the advent upon earth of universal consolation.

"Blessed," said the master, "are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God.

"Blessed are they that have been persecuted for

<sup>331</sup> Matt. 13: 1, 2; Mark 3: 9; 4: 1; Luke 5: 3.

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righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." <sup>332</sup>

His preaching was soft and gentle, inspired with a feeling for nature and the perfume of the fields. He loved flowers, and based on them his most charming lessons. The birds of the air, the sea, the mountains, and the games of children were in turn touched on in his teaching. There was no trace of Greek influence in his style; it approached much more nearly to that of the Hebrew parabolists, and especially of the aphorisms of the Jewish doctors, his contemporaries, such as we read in the *Pirké Aboth*. His teachings were not developed very far, and formed a species of propositions in the style of the Koran, which, pieced together, afterwards went to form the long discourses written by Matthew.<sup>333</sup> No transition united these diverse fragments; generally however the same inspiration breathed through them and gave them their unity. It was above all in parable that the Master excelled. There was nothing in Judaism to give him a model for this delightful feature.<sup>334</sup> He created it. It is true that in the Buddhist books we find parables of exactly the same tone and construction as the Gospel parables; <sup>335</sup> but it is difficult to admit that a Buddhist influence has been exercised in the latter. The spirit of mildness and depth of feeling which animated nascent Christianity and Buddhism alike, perhaps suffice to explain these similarities.

A total indifference to external life and the vain superfluous luxuries in furniture and dress, which our drearier

<sup>332</sup> Matt. 5: 3-10; Luke 6: 20-25.

<sup>333</sup> These are the "Lord's discourses" (λόγια κυριακά) spoken of by Papias in Eusebius (3: 39).

<sup>334</sup> The apologue, such as we find it in Judges 9: 8-15 [the bramble] and 2 Sam. 12: 1-6 [the ewe-lamb], has only a formal likeness to the Gospel parable, whose real originality is in the feeling that runs through it. The parables of the *Midraschin* are also of quite another spirit.

<sup>335</sup> For example, the "Lotus of the true Law," 1 and 4.



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countries make necessary to us, was the consequence of the sweet and simple life lived in Galilee. Cold climates, by compelling man to a perpetual conflict with external nature, cause him to attach much importance to the quest of comfort. On the other hand, lands that awaken few desires are lands of idealism and of poesy. In such countries the accessories of life are insignificant compared with the pleasure of being alive. The embellishment of the house is superfluous, for it is inhabited as little as possible. The abundant and regular food of less generous climates would be considered heavy and disagreeable. And as to luxury in dress, what can rival that which God has given to the earth and the birds of the air? Labour in climates of this kind seems useless; its return is not worth the expenditure of energy it requires. The beasts of the field are better clad than the richest of men, and they do nothing. This disdain which, when it has not idleness as its motive, greatly tends to loftiness of soul, inspired Jesus with some charming apologues:—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth," said he, "where moth and rust doth consume, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also. . . . No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they?"

And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto his stature? And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” <sup>336</sup>

This essentially Galilean feeling had an important influence on the destiny of the infant sect. The happy flock, trusting to the heavenly Father for the satisfaction of its needs as its first principle, looked upon the cares of life as an evil which stifles in man the germ of all good.<sup>337</sup> Each day they asked of God the bread for the morrow.<sup>338</sup> Why lay up treasure? The kingdom of God was at hand. “Sell that ye have and give alms,” said the Master. “Make for yourselves purses which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not.”<sup>339</sup> What more foolish than to heap up treasures for heirs whom thou wilt never be-

<sup>336</sup> Matt. 6: 19-34; Luke 12: 22-34; and 16: 13. Compare the precepts in Luke 10: 7, 8—expressed with the same simplicity—with the Babylonian Talmud, *Sota*, 48 b.

<sup>337</sup> Matt. 13: 22; Mark 4: 19; Luke 8: 14.

<sup>338</sup> Matt. 6: 2; Luke 11: 3. This is the meaning of “daily bread,” ἐπι-οὔσιος.

<sup>339</sup> Luke 12: 33, 34. Compare the fine maxims, much like these, which the Talmud puts in the mouth of Monobarus (Jerusalem Talmud, *Peah*, 15 b).





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#### PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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hold? <sup>340</sup> As an example of human folly, Jesus loved to quote the case of a man who, after having enlarged his barns and amassed wealth for long years, died before having enjoyed it. <sup>341</sup> The brigandage, which was deeply rooted in Galilee, <sup>342</sup> gave much force to views of this kind. The poor man who did not suffer from his poverty should regard himself as favoured by God; whilst the rich man, having a less sure possession, was the true pauper. In our societies, founded on a very rigorous conception of private property, the position of the poor is horrible; they have literally no place under the sun. There are no flowers, no grass, no shade, except for him who possesses the earth. In the East, these are gifts of God which belong to no man. The proprietor has but a slender privilege; nature is the inheritance of all.

In this, moreover, infant Christianity only followed in the footsteps of the Jewish sects which practised a monastic life. A communistic element entered into these sects, Essenes and Therapeutæ, which were held in equal disfavour by Pharisees and Sadducees. The Messianic doctrine, an entirely political question among the orthodox Jews, was with them an entirely social question. By means of a gentle, disciplined, contemplative existence, the liberty of the individual had full scope, and these little churches in which, not without reason perhaps, some imitation of neo-Pythagorean institutions has been suspected, believed they were inaugurating the heavenly kingdom upon earth. The thought of Utopias of blessed life, founded on the brotherhood of men and pure worship of the true God, haunted lofty souls, and on all sides produced bold and sincere but short-lived attempts at realisation. <sup>343</sup>

<sup>340</sup> Luke 12: 20.

<sup>341</sup> Luke 12: 16-19.

<sup>342</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 17, 10: 4, 5; *Life*, 11, 12.

<sup>343</sup> Philo, *Quod omnis bonus liber*, *De vita contemplativa*. Josephus,

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Jesus, whose relations with the Essenes are difficult to determine exactly (resemblances in history not always implying relations), was certainly on this point their brother. Community of goods was for some time the rule in the new society.<sup>344</sup> Covetousness was the cardinal sin;<sup>345</sup> but care must be taken to note that the sin of covetousness, against which Christian morality has been so severe, was then simple attachment to private property. The first condition of becoming a disciple of Jesus was to sell one's goods and to give the proceeds to the poor. Those who drew back from this extreme measure were not permitted to enter the community.<sup>346</sup> Jesus often repeated that he who has found the kingdom of God ought to buy it at the price of all his possessions, and that, in so doing, he still makes an advantageous bargain. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls; and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had and bought it."<sup>347</sup> Alas! the practical drawbacks of the theory were not long in making themselves felt. A treasurer was required, and Judas of Kerioth was chosen for that office. Rightly or wrongly, he was accused of stealing from the common purse;<sup>348</sup> a heavy burden of hatred accumulated on his head.

Sometimes the Master, more versed in things of heaven than those of earth, taught a still more singular political

*Antiq.*, 18, 1: 5; *Wars*, 2, 8: 2-13. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 5: 17; Epiphan. *Adv. hæ.* 10, 19, 29: 5.

<sup>344</sup> Acts 4: 32, 34-37; 5: 1-11.

<sup>345</sup> Matt. 13: 22; Luke 12: 15-21.

<sup>346</sup> Matt. 19: 21; Mark 10: 21, 22, 28-30; Luke 18: 22, 23, 28.

<sup>347</sup> Matt. 13: 44-46.

<sup>348</sup> John 12: 6.

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economy. In a strange parable, a steward is praised for having made himself friends among the poor at the expense of his master, in order that the poor in their turn might secure his entrance into the kingdom of heaven. The poor in fact, necessarily being the almoners of this kingdom, will only receive those who have given alms to them. A prudent man, who takes thought of the future, ought therefore to seek to gain their favour. "And the Pharisees," says the Evangelist, "who were lovers of money, heard all these things: and they scoffed at him."<sup>349</sup> Did they also hear the formidable parable which follows? "Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day: and a certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; yea, even the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted and thou art in anguish."<sup>350</sup> What could be more just! Later, this parable was called that of the "wicked rich man." But it is purely and simply the parable of the "rich man." He is in hell

<sup>349</sup> Luke 16: 14.

<sup>350</sup> Luke 16: 19-25. Luke, as we see (compare 6: 20, 21, 25, 26), has a very marked leaning to communism, and has, no doubt, exaggerated this trait in the teaching of Jesus. But it is also sufficiently pronounced in Matthew's *λόγια*.

because he is rich, because he does not give his wealth to the poor, because he dines well, while other men at his door dine badly. Latterly, taking a less exaggerated view for the moment, Jesus does not make it obligatory to sell one's goods, and give them to the poor, save as a counsel of perfection; but he still makes the terrible declaration: "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."<sup>351</sup>

In all this an admirable idea of profound import governed Jesus, as well as the band of joyous children his followers, and made him for eternity the true creator of the peace of the soul, the great consoler of life. In freeing man from what he called "the cares of this world," Jesus might go to excess and injure the essential conditions of human society; but he founded that spiritual exaltation which for centuries has filled souls with joy in the midst of this vale of tears. He saw with perfect clarity of vision that man's recklessness, his lack of philosophy and morality, most often proceed from the distractions which he permits himself, and the cares, multiplied beyond measure by civilisation, which harass him.<sup>352</sup> The Gospel has thus been the supreme remedy for the dull weariness of common life, a perpetual *sursum corda*, a powerful agent in making men forget the miserable cares of earth, a gentle appeal like that which Jesus whispered in the ear of Martha, "Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful."<sup>353</sup> Thanks to Jesus, the dullest existence, that most absorbed by sad or

<sup>351</sup> Matt. 19: 24; Mark 10: 25; Luke 18: 25; Gospel of Hebrews: Hilgenfeld, *N. T. extra can. rec.* 4: 17. This proverbial phrase is found in the Talmud (Babylonian *Berakoth*, 55 b; *Baba metsia* 38 b) and the Koran (Sura, 7: 38). Origen and the Greek expositors, not knowing the Semitic proverb, have wrongly taken the word to mean a *camel* (κάμινος).

<sup>352</sup> Matt. 13: 22.

<sup>353</sup> Luke 10: 41, 42.

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humiliating duties, has had its glimpse of heaven. In our busy civilisation the memory of the free life of Galilee has been like perfume from another world, like the "dew of Hermon,"<sup>354</sup> which has kept drought and grossness from entirely invading the fields of God.

<sup>354</sup> Psalm 133:3.

## CHAPTER XI

### *The Kingdom of the Poor*

These maxims, good for a land where life is nourished by the air and the light, and this subtle communism of a band of God's children resting in faith on the bosom of their Father, might be fitted for a simple sect, upheld by the constant expectation that its Utopia was about to be realised. But it is clear that they could not be attractive to society as a whole. Jesus, indeed, very soon understood that the official world of his time would by no means lend its support to his kingdom. He took his resolution with extreme daring. Leaving the world, with its hard heart and narrow prejudices, on one side, he turned towards the simple. A vast rearrangement of classes was to take place. The Kingdom of God was made—(1) for children and those like them; (2) for the world's outcasts, victims of that social arrogance which repulses the good but humble man; (3) for heretics and schismatics, publicans, Samaritans, and the pagans of Tyre and Sidon. A vigorously conceived parable explained this appeal to the people and justified it.<sup>355</sup> A king has prepared a wedding feast, and sends his servants to seek those who have been invited. Each one excuses himself; some even maltreat the messengers. Then the king takes a decisive step. The people of rank have not accepted his invitation. Be it so; his guests shall be the first-comers—the people gathered from the highways and byways, the poor, the beggars, the lame; it matters not who, for the room must be filled. "For I say unto you,"

<sup>355</sup> Matt. 22: 2-14; Luke 14: 16-24; cf. Matt. 8: 11, 12; 20: 33-41.



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said he, "that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper" (Luke 14: 24).

Pure Ebionism then—the doctrine that the poor (*ebionim*) alone will be saved, that the reign of the poor is at hand—was the doctrine of Jesus. "Woe unto you that are rich," he said, "for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you, ye that are full now! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you, ye that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep" (Luke 6: 24, 25). "And he said to him also that had bidden him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor rich neighbours, lest haply they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; because they have not wherewith to recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14: 12-14). It was perhaps in a like sense that he often repeated, "Be good bankers,"<sup>356</sup>—that is to say, make good investments for the Kingdom of God by giving your wealth to the poor in conformity with the old proverb, "He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord" (Prov. 19: 17).

There was nothing new indeed in all this. The most exalted democratic movement in human annals (and too the only one which has succeeded, for it alone has maintained its position in the domain of pure thought) had long agitated the Jewish race. The thought that God is the avenger of the poor and weak against the rich and powerful is to be found on every page of the writings of the Old Testament. The history of Israel is, of all histories, that in which the popular spirit has been most constantly in

<sup>356</sup> A saying preserved by very ancient tradition, and often quoted (Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 1: 28). It is also found in Origen, St. Jerome, and a great number of the Fathers of the Church.

power. Prophets, true, and, in one sense, the boldest of tribunes, thundered without ceasing against the great, and established a close connection, on the one hand, between the words "rich, impious, violent, wicked," on the other, between the words "poor, gentle, humble, pious."<sup>357</sup> Under the Seleucidæ, the aristocrats, having almost all apostatised and gone over to Hellenism, such associations of ideas only became stronger. The Book of Enoch contains maledictions still more violent than those of the Gospel against the worldly, the wealthy, and the powerful.<sup>358</sup> In it luxury is depicted as a crime. The "Son of man," in this strange apocalypse, dethrones kings, tears them from their voluptuous life, and casts them into hell.<sup>359</sup> The initiation of Judæa to secular life, and the recent introduction of an entirely worldly element of luxury and comfort, provoked a furious reaction in favour of patriarchal simplicity. "Woe unto you who despise the humble dwelling and inheritance of your fathers! Woe unto you who build your palaces with the sweat of others! Each stone, each brick of which it is built, is a sin."<sup>360</sup> The name of "poor" (*ebion*) became a synonym of saint, of "friend of God." It was the name by which the Galilean disciples of Jesus loved to call themselves; for a long time it was the name of the Judaising Christians of Batanea and the Hauran (Nazarenes, Hebrews) who remained faithful to the language, as well as to the primitive teaching of Jesus, and boasted that they had in their midst the descendants of his family.<sup>361</sup> At the close of

<sup>357</sup> See especially Amos 2: 6; Isaiah 63: 9; Psalms 25: 9, 37: 11, and 69: 33; also the Hebrew lexicon under the words עשיר, הוללים, עריין עשיר תמיר.

<sup>358</sup> Chaps. 62, 63, 97, 100, 104.

<sup>359</sup> Chap. 46: 4-8 (possibly a Christian interpolation).

<sup>360</sup> Enoch 99: 13, 14.

<sup>361</sup> Julius Africanus in Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 1: 7; Euseb. *De situ et nom. loc. hebr.* under Χωβὰ; Origen *c. Celsum*, 2: 1, and 5: 61; Epiphani. 29: 7, 9, and 30: 2, 18.

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the second century these good sectaries, having remained outside the great current which had carried away all the other churches, were treated as heretics (*Ebionites*) and a pretended founder of their heresy (*Ebion*) was invented to explain their name.<sup>362</sup>

It might have been easily foreseen that this exaggerated taste for poverty could not last very long. It was one of those Utopian elements, always to be found mingled in the beginnings of great movements, which time rectifies. Cast into the midst of human society, Christianity could not fail to consent very easily to the reception of rich men into her bosom, just as Buddhism, in its origin exclusively monastic, soon began, as conversions multiplied, to admit the laity. But a birthmark is always kept. Although it quickly passed away and was forgotten, Ebionism left, in the whole history of Christian institutions, a leaven which has not been lost. The collection of the *Logia*, or discourses of Jesus, was formed, or at least completed, in the Ebionite centre of Batanea.<sup>363</sup> "Poverty" remained an ideal from which true descendants of Jesus were never afterwards separated. To possess nothing was the true evangelical state; mendicancy became a virtue, a state of holiness. The great Umbrian movement of the thirteenth century, which, of all attempts at religious construction, most resembles the Galilean movement, was entirely carried through in the name of poverty. Francis of Assisi, the one man who, by his exquisite goodness, by his delicate, pure, and tender communion with

<sup>362</sup> See especially Origen *c. Celsum*, 2: 1; *De principiis*, 4: 22 (cf. Epiphan. 30: 17). Irenæus, Origen, Eusebius, and the Apostolical Constitutions know of no such person. The author of the *Philosophumena* [Hippolytus] seems to hesitate (7: 34, 35; 10: 22, 23). The imaginary Ebion gained currency through Tertullian, and still more through Epiphanius. All the fathers are agreed as to the etymology: *Ἐβίων* = *πτωχός*.

<sup>363</sup> Epiphan. 19, 29, 30 (especially 29: 9).

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the life of the universe, beyond all others approached most closely to Jesus, was a poor man. The mendicant orders, and the innumerable communistic sects of the Middle Ages (*Pauvres de Lyon, Bégards, Bons-Hommes, Fratricelles, Humiliés, Pauvres Évangéliques*, Votaries of the Eternal Gospel), claimed to be, and in fact were, the true disciples of Jesus. But, in this case too, the most impracticable dreams of the new religion were fruitful in results. Pious mendicity, of which our industrial and highly organised communities are so impatient, was, in its day and in a suitable climate, full of charm. To a multitude of mild and contemplative souls it offered the only fitting condition. To have made poverty an object of love and desire, to have exalted the beggar to the altar, and to have sanctified the garment of the poor man, was a master-touch which political economy may not appreciate, but in face of which no true moralist can remain indifferent. Mankind, in order to bear its burden, must needs believe that it is not paid entirely by wages. The greatest service that can be rendered it is to repeat often that it lives not by bread alone.

Like all great men, Jesus was fond of common folk, and felt at his ease with them. To his mind the Gospel was made for the poor; it was to them that he brought the good tidings of salvation.<sup>364</sup> He particularly esteemed all those whom orthodox Judaism disdained. Love of the people, pity for its powerlessness—the feeling of the democratic leader who feels the spirit of the multitude quick within him, and knows himself to be its natural interpreter—reveal themselves at every instant in his acts and sayings.<sup>365</sup>

The chosen flock in fact presented somewhat mingled characteristics, likely to astonish the rigorous moralist. It counted amongst its number people with whom a Jew who

<sup>364</sup> Matt. 10: 23; 11: 5; Luke 6: 20, 21.

<sup>365</sup> Matt. 9: 10-13; Luke 15: 1.

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had any respect for himself would have refused to associate.<sup>366</sup> It may be that Jesus found in this society, unaffected by ordinary conventions, more distinction of intellect and goodness of heart than he would have done in a pedantic and narrow-minded middle class, priding himself on its outward morality. The Pharisees, exaggerating the Mosaic injunctions, had come to believe themselves defiled by contact with men less strict than themselves; with regard to their meals, they almost rivalled the puerile distinctions of caste in India. Despising such miserable aberrations of religious feeling, Jesus loved to eat with those who were its victims; by his side at table were seen persons reputed to be of evil life, owing their reputation perhaps to the fact that they did not share the follies of the false devotees. The Pharisees and doctors protested against the scandal. "See," said they, "with what men he eats!" Jesus returned subtle answers which exasperated the hypocrites. "They that are whole have no need of a physician;"<sup>367</sup> or again: "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing."<sup>368</sup> Or again: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."<sup>369</sup> Or again: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."<sup>370</sup> Lastly, there is the beautiful parable of the prodigal son, in which he who has fallen is represented as having a kind of right to be loved above him who has always been righteous. Weak or guilty women, carried away with such charms, and realising, for the first time, the pleasures of

<sup>366</sup> Matt. 9:11; Mark 2:16; Luke 5:30.

<sup>367</sup> Matt. 9:12.

<sup>368</sup> Luke 15:3-5.

<sup>369</sup> Luke 19:10.

<sup>370</sup> Matt. 9:13.

contact with virtue, freely approached him. People were surprised that he did not repulse them. "Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have perceived who and what manner of woman this is which toucheth him, that she is a sinner."<sup>371</sup> Jesus replied by the parable of the creditor who forgives his debtors' unequal debts, in which he did not hesitate to prefer the lot of him to whom the greatest debt was remitted.<sup>372</sup> He appreciated states of soul only in proportion as they were inspired by love. Women with tearful hearts, through their sins inclined to feelings of humility, were nearer his kingdom than people of commonplace nature, who frequently have little merit in not having fallen. We may understand, on the other hand, how these tender souls, finding in their conversion to the sect an easy means of retrieving character, would passionately attach themselves to him.

Far from seeking to soothe the murmurings stirred up by his contempt for the social susceptibilities of the time, he seemed to find pleasure in exciting them. Never did any one more loftily avow that disdain of the "world" which is the essential condition of great things and great originality. He forgave the rich man, but only when the rich man, owing to some prejudice, was held in disfavour by society.<sup>373</sup> He greatly preferred men of dubiously respectable life and of small consideration in the eyes of the orthodox leaders. "Verily I say unto you that the publicans and the harlots

<sup>371</sup> Luke 7: 39.

<sup>372</sup> Luke 7: 37-50. Luke is fond of putting in relief all that refers to the pardon of sinners: see 10: 30-35; 15, 17: 16-19; 18: 10-14; 19: 2-10; 23: 39-43. The story of the supper at Simon's house has been combined with that of the anointing which took place at Bethany a few days before the death of Jesus. But the pardon of the "woman that was a sinner" is an essential feature in the anecdotes of his life: compare John 8: 3-11; Papias in Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3: 39.

<sup>373</sup> Luke 19: 2-10.



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go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him.”<sup>374</sup> One can imagine how galling the reproach of not having followed the good example set by prostitutes must have been to men who made a profession of seriousness and rigid morality.

Jesus had no external affectation, and made no display of austerity. He did not shun pleasure; he willingly went to marriage feasts. One of his miracles was performed, it is said, to enliven a wedding in a small town. In the East weddings take place in the evening. Each of the guests carries a lamp; the lights, coming and going, give a charming effect. Jesus liked these gay and animated scenes and drew parables from them.<sup>375</sup> Such conduct, compared with that of John the Baptist, gave offence.<sup>376</sup> One day, when the disciples of John and the Pharisees were keeping the fast, it was asked, “Why do John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the sons of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then will they fast in that day.”<sup>377</sup> His gentle gaiety found constant expression in vivid ideas and amiable pleasantries. “Whereunto then,” said he, “shall I liken the men of this generation, and to what are they like? They are like unto children that sit in the market-place and call one to another; which say, We piped unto you, and ye did not dance; we wailed, and ye did not weep.”<sup>378</sup> For John the Baptist is

<sup>374</sup> Matt. 21: 31, 32.

<sup>375</sup> Matt. 25: 1-23.

<sup>376</sup> Mark 11: 18; Luke 5: 33.

<sup>377</sup> Matt. 9: 14-17; Mark 2: 18-22; Luke 5: 33-35.

<sup>378</sup> Words referring to some childish game.

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come, eating no bread nor drinking wine, and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking, and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. And wisdom is justified of all her children.”<sup>379</sup>

He thus journeyed through Galilee in the midst of continual festivities. He rode on a mule. In the East this is a good and safe method of travelling. The large black eyes of the animal, shaded by long eyelashes, give it a very gentle aspect. His disciples sometimes surrounded him with a kind of rustic pomp, at the expense of their garments which they used as carpets. They put them on the mule which carried him, or spread them on the ground in his path.<sup>380</sup> When he entered a house it was considered a joy and a blessing. He stopped in villages and large farms, where he received warm hospitality. In the East, the house into which a stranger enters immediately becomes a public place. The whole village assembles in it, the children invade it, and, though driven away by the servants, always return. Jesus could not suffer these gentle hearers to be harshly treated. He had them brought to him and took them in his arms.<sup>381</sup> Mothers, encouraged by such a reception, used to bring him their little ones, that he might touch them.<sup>382</sup> Women came to pour oil upon his head and perfumes on his feet. His disciples would sometimes repulse them as troublesome; but Jesus, who loved ancient usages and all that showed simplicity of heart, made reparation

<sup>379</sup> That is, “the act speaks for itself.” Matt. 11: 16–19; Luke 7: 32–35. The proverb means that “men are blind; the works of God are made known by the works themselves.” (Read *ἐργων*, not *τέκνων*, following the Vatican MS. *B*, and the *Cod. Sinait.* The reading in Matthew was probably corrected from that in Luke, which seemed easier.)

<sup>380</sup> Matt. 21: 7, 8.

<sup>381</sup> Matt. 19: 13–15; Mark 9: 36, 37; Luke 18: 15, 16.

<sup>382</sup> Mark 10: 13–16; Luke 18: 15.

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for the unkindness done by his too zealous friends. He protected those who desired to do him honour.<sup>383</sup> So it was that children and women adored him. The reproach of alienating from their families these gentle, easily led creatures was one of the charges most frequently brought against him by his enemies.<sup>384</sup>

The new religion was thus, in many respects, a women's and children's movement. The latter were like a young guard about Jesus for the inauguration of his innocent kingship, and gave him little ovations which pleased him much, calling him "Son of David," crying *Hosanna*,<sup>385</sup> and bearing palms around him. Jesus, like Savonarola, perhaps made them serve as instruments for pious missions; he was very glad to see these young apostles, who did not compromise him, rush to the front and give him titles which he did not dare to take himself. He let them speak, and, when he was asked if he heard, he evasively answered that the praise that comes from young lips is the most pleasing to God.<sup>386</sup> He lost no occasion of repeating that the little ones are sacred beings,<sup>387</sup> that the kingdom of God belongs to children,<sup>388</sup> that one must become a child to enter therein,<sup>389</sup> that one ought to receive it as a child,<sup>390</sup> that the heavenly Father hides his secrets from the wise and reveals them to little ones.<sup>391</sup> In his mind the idea of disciples

<sup>383</sup> Matt. 26: 7-13; Mark 14: 3-9; Luke 7: 37-50.

<sup>384</sup> See Marcion's addition to Luke 23: 2, in Epiphanius 42: 11. If Marcion's omissions are without critical importance, it is not so with his additions, when they proceed, not from his prepossessions, but from the state of the manuscripts he used.

<sup>385</sup> The cry uttered in the processions at the Feast of Tabernacles, with the waving of palms (Mishna, *Sukka*, 3: 9), a still existing custom.

<sup>386</sup> Matt. 21: 15, 16.

<sup>387</sup> Matt. 18: 5, 10, 14; Luke 17: 2.

<sup>388</sup> Matt. 19: 14; Mark 10: 14; Luke 18: 16.

<sup>389</sup> Matt. 18: 1-6; Mark 9: 33-41; Luke 9: 46.

<sup>390</sup> Mark 10: 15.

<sup>391</sup> Matt. 11: 25; Luke 10: 21.

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is almost synonymous with that of children.<sup>392</sup> On one occasion when they had one of those quarrels for precedence which were not rare amongst them, Jesus took a little child, put him in their midst, and said to them, "Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."<sup>393</sup>

It was childhood, in fact, in its divine spontaneity, in its simple bewilderment of joy, that took possession of the earth. Every man, at every moment, believed that the kingdom so greatly desired was at hand. Each one already saw himself seated on a throne at the side of the Master.<sup>394</sup> They divided amongst themselves the places of honour in the new kingdom,<sup>395</sup> and sought to calculate the precise date of its coming. The new doctrine was called the "Good Tidings"; it had no other name. An old word, *paradise*, which Hebrew, like all the languages of the East, had borrowed from the Persian, in which it originally designated the parks of the Achæmenidæ, summed up the general dream,—a beautiful garden where the delightful life here below would be eternally prolonged.<sup>396</sup>

How long did this intoxication last? We cannot tell. No one during the course of these enchanted visions, measured time any more than we measure a dream. Time was suspended in duration; a week was as an age. But, whether it filled years or months, the dream was so beautiful that humanity has lived upon it ever since, and it is still our consolation to gather its weakened perfume. Never did so much gladness fill the heart of man. For a moment humanity, in this, its most vigorous effort to soar above the world,

<sup>392</sup> Matt. 10: 42; 18: 5, 14; Mark 9: 36; Luke 17: 2.

<sup>393</sup> Matt. 18: 4; Mark 9: 33-36; Luke 9: 46-48.

<sup>394</sup> Luke 22: 30.

<sup>395</sup> Mark 10: 37, 40, 41.

<sup>396</sup> Luke 23: 43; 2 Cor. 12: 4. *Carm. Sibyll.* procem., 86; Babylonian Talmud, *Chagiga*, 14 b.

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forgot the leaden weight which binds it to the earth, forgot the sorrows of the life below. Happy he to whom it has been granted to behold with his own eyes this divine blossoming, and to share, if but for a day, the incomparable illusion! but yet more happy, Jesus would tell us, shall he be who, freed from all illusion, shall conjure up within himself the celestial vision, and, with no millenarian dreams, no chimerical paradise, no signs in the heavens, but by the uprightness of his will and the poetry of his soul, shall be able to create anew in his own heart the true kingdom of God!

## CHAPTER XII

### *The Embassy from John in Prison*

Whilst joyous Galilee was celebrating with feasting the coming of the Well-beloved, the sorrowful John, in his prison of Machero, was pining away with yearning and desire. The successes of the young Master, whom he had seen for some months among his followers, reached his ears. It was said that the Messiah predicted by the prophets, he who was to set up the kingdom of Israel once more, had come and was proving his presence in Galilee by marvellous works. John wished to inquire into the truth of this rumour, and, as he was in free communication with his disciples, he chose two of them to go to Jesus in Galilee.<sup>397</sup>

The two disciples found Jesus at the height of his fame. The atmosphere of joyfulness around him filled them with surprise. Accustomed to fasting, to incessant prayer, and to a life full of aspiration, they were astonished at finding themselves suddenly brought into the midst of the joys attending the welcome of the Messiah.<sup>398</sup> They gave Jesus their message: "Art thou he that cometh? Or look we for another" (Luke 7: 20)? Jesus, who, from that time forth, had no longer any doubt with respect to his own position as the Messiah, enumerated to them the works which ought to characterise the coming of the kingdom of God—such as the healing of the sick, and the good tidings of speedy salvation preached to the poor. All these works he himself did. "And blessed is he," added Jesus, "who shall have

<sup>397</sup> Matt. 11; 2-11; Luke 7: 18-23.

<sup>398</sup> Matt. 9: 14-17.



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no doubt concerning me" (Luke 7:23). Whether this answer reached John the Baptist before his death, or what effect it had on the austere ascetic, is not known. Did he die consoled in the certainty that he whom he had announced was already living, or did he remain dubious as to the mission of Jesus? There is nothing to inform us. Seeing, however, that his school continued to exist for a considerable time contemporaneously with the Christian churches, there is reason to suppose that, notwithstanding his regard for Jesus, John did not look upon him as having realised the divine promises. Death moreover came to cut short his perplexities. The invincible freedom of the lonely ascetic was to crown his restless career of persecution with the only end which was worthy of it.

The leniency which Antipas had at first shown towards John was not to last long. In the conversations which, according to Christian tradition, John had had with the tetrarch, he never ceased to tell him that his marriage was unlawful and that he ought to send Herodias away.<sup>399</sup> It is easy to imagine the hatred which the grand-daughter of Herod the Great must necessarily have had for this importunate counsellor. She only waited an opportunity to ruin him.

Her daughter, Salome, born of her first marriage, and, like herself, ambitious and dissolute, aided her in her designs. In that year (probably the year 30) Antipas was at Machero on the anniversary of his birthday. Herod the Great had had constructed in the interior of the fortress a magnificent palace, where the tetrarch frequently resided. There he gave a great feast, during which Salome performed one of those characteristic dances which, in Syria, were not considered as unbecoming a lady of distinction. Antipas being much pleased, asked the dancer what she most desired,

<sup>399</sup> Matt. 14: 4, 5; Mark 6: 18, 19; Luke 3: 19.

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and she replied, at her mother's instigation: "I will that thou forthwith give me in a charger the head of John the Baptist."<sup>400</sup> Antipas was sorry, but he did not care to refuse. A guard took the dish, went and cut off the prisoner's head, and brought it in.<sup>401</sup>

The disciples of the Baptist obtained his body and laid it in a tomb, but the people were much displeased. Six years after, Hareth, having attacked Antipas, in order to recover Machero and avenge his daughter's dishonour, Antipas was vanquished; and his defeat was generally looked upon as being a punishment for the murder of John.<sup>402</sup>

The news of John's death was carried to Jesus by the disciples of the Baptist.<sup>403</sup> The last step taken by John with regard to Jesus had effectually united the two schools in the closest bonds. Jesus, fearing an increase of ill-will on the part of Antipas, took precautions and retired into the desert, where many people followed him.<sup>404</sup> By the exercise of extreme frugality, the holy company found it possible to live there; and in this a miracle was naturally seen.<sup>405</sup> From this time Jesus always spoke of John with redoubled admiration. He declared without hesitation<sup>406</sup> that he was more than a prophet, that the Law and the ancient prophets had had their force only until his coming,<sup>407</sup> that he had abrogated them, but that the kingdom of heaven would abrogate him in turn. In short, he attributed to him a special place in the scheme of the Christian mystery, which constituted him

<sup>400</sup> A light tray or platter, such as are used in the East for serving food or drink.

<sup>401</sup> Matt. 14: 3-12; Mark 6: 14-29; Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 5: 2.

<sup>402</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 5: 1, 2.

<sup>403</sup> Matt. 14: 12.

<sup>404</sup> Matt. 14: 13.

<sup>405</sup> Matt. 14: 15-21; Mark 6: 35-44; Luke 9: 12-17; John 6: 2-13.

<sup>406</sup> Matt. 11: 7-11; Luke 7: 24-28.

<sup>407</sup> Matt. 11: 12, 13; Luke 16: 16.

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the link of union between the reign of the ancient covenant and that of the new kingdom.

The prophet Malachi, whose opinion in this matter was eagerly cited,<sup>408</sup> had with much force announced a precursor of the Messiah, who was to prepare men for the final regeneration, a messenger who should come to make straight the ways before the chosen one of God. This messenger was none other than the prophet Elias, who, according to a widely-spread belief, was soon to descend from heaven, whither he had been borne, that he might prepare men by repentance for the great advent, and reconcile God with his people.<sup>409</sup> Sometimes with Elias was associated either the patriarch Enoch, to whom for one or two centuries high sanctity had been attributed,<sup>410</sup> or Jeremiah,<sup>411</sup> who was regarded as a kind of tutelary genius of the people, constantly engaged in praying for them before the throne of God.<sup>412</sup> This idea of the imminent resurrection of two ancient prophets to serve as heralds of the Messiah is also to be discovered in so striking a form in the doctrine of the Parsees, that we feel much inclined to believe that it came from Persia.<sup>413</sup> However this may be, it formed at the time of Jesus an integral part of the Jewish theories about the Messiah. It was admitted that the appearance of "two

<sup>408</sup> Mal. 3, 4; Eccles. 48: 10. (See above, chap. 6.)

<sup>409</sup> Matt. 11: 14; 17: 10. Mark 6: 15; 8: 28; 9: 10-13. Luke 9: 8, 19. John 1: 21. Justin, *Tryph.* 49.

<sup>410</sup> Eccles. 44: 16. 4 Esdras 5: 26; 7: 28; comparing 14: 9, and the last lines of the Syriac, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Armenian versions (Volkmar, *Esdra proph.* 212; Ceriani, *Monum. sacr. and prof.* 1, 2: 124; Armenian Bible of Zohrab, Venice, 1805, suppl. p. 25).

<sup>411</sup> Matt. 16: 14.

<sup>412</sup> 2 Macc. 15: 13-16.

<sup>413</sup> Anquetil-Duperron, citations from Zendavesta 1: 2, 46; corrected by Spiegel in *Zeitschr. der deutsch. morgenländ. Gesellschaft*, 1: 261 *et seq.*; extract from *Jemasp-Nameh* in Spiegel's *Avesta*, 1: 34. None of the Parsee texts implying the resurrection of prophets or forerunners is ancient; but the ideas hinted in them seem to be much older.

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faithful witnesses," clad in garments of repentance, would be the prologue of the great drama which was about to be unfolded to the amazement of the universe.<sup>414</sup>

That, with these ideas, Jesus and his disciples could have no doubt as to the mission of John the Baptist is easily understood. When the scribes raised the objection that it was still a question whether the Messiah could really have come, since Elias had not yet appeared,<sup>415</sup> they replied that Elias had come, that John was Elias raised from the dead.<sup>416</sup> By his manner of life, by his opposition to the political authorities in power, John in fact recalled that strange figure in the ancient history of Israel.<sup>417</sup> Jesus was not silent on the merits and excellences of his forerunner. He said that no greater man had been born amongst the children of men. He forcibly rebuked the Pharisees and the doctors for not having accepted his baptism, and for not being converted at his voice.<sup>418</sup>

The disciples of Jesus were faithful to these principles of their Master. Respect for John was a constant tradition during the first Christian generation.<sup>419</sup> He was reputed to be a relative of Jesus.<sup>420</sup> His baptism was regarded as the earliest event in all the gospel history and in some sort as the essential introduction to it.<sup>421</sup> In order to establish the latter's mission upon universally accepted testimony, it was asserted that John, when he first saw Jesus, proclaimed

<sup>414</sup> Rev. 11: 3-6.

<sup>415</sup> Mark 9: 10.

<sup>416</sup> Matt. 9: 14; 17: 10-13. Mark 6: 15; 9: 10-12. Luke 9: 8. John 1: 21-25.

<sup>417</sup> Luke 1: 17.

<sup>418</sup> Matt. 21: 32; Luke 7: 29, 30.

<sup>419</sup> Acts 19: 4.

<sup>420</sup> Luke 1.

<sup>421</sup> Acts 1: 22; 10: 37, 38. This is fully explained if we admit, with the fourth Gospel (chap. 1.), that Jesus enlisted his first and most important disciples from the following of John.

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him the Messiah; that he recognised himself to be his inferior, unworthy to loosen the latchets of his shoes; that at first he declined to baptise him, maintaining that it was he who ought to be baptised by Jesus.<sup>422</sup> These were exaggerations which are sufficiently refuted by the dubious form of John's last message.<sup>423</sup> But, in a more general sense, John remains in the Christian legend what, in reality, he was—the austere harbinger, the gloomy preacher of repentance before the joy of the bridegroom's coming, the prophet who announces the kingdom of God and dies without beholding it. This giant of the early history of Christianity, this eater of locusts and wild honey, this fierce redresser of wrongs, was the bitter wormwood which prepared the lips for the sweetness of the kingdom of God. His execution by Herodias inaugurated the era of Christian martyrs; he was the first witness for the new faith. The worldly, who in him recognised their true foe, could not suffer him to live; his mutilated corpse, stretched on the threshold of Christianity, showed the bloody path in which so many others were to follow after him.

The school of John did not die with its founder. For some time it survived in a form distinct from that of Jesus, and at first the two were on good terms. Several years after the death of both masters, people were baptised with the baptism of John. Certain persons belonged to both schools at the same time, for example, the celebrated Apollos, the rival of St. Paul (about the year 54), and a large number of the Christians in Ephesus.<sup>424</sup> Josephus, in the year 53, listened to the teaching of an ascetic called Banou,<sup>425</sup> who greatly resembled John the Baptist, and was

<sup>422</sup> Matt. 3: 14, 15; Luke 3: 16; John 1: 15-18, and 5: 32, 33.

<sup>423</sup> Matt. 11: 2, 3; Luke 7: 18-20.

<sup>424</sup> Acts 18: 25; 19: 1-5. Compare Epiphani. *Adv. hæres.* 30: 16.

<sup>425</sup> Josephus, *Life*, 2.

perhaps of his school. This Banou <sup>426</sup> dwelt in the desert and clothed himself with the leaves of trees; he lived on nothing but wild plants and fruits, and baptised himself frequently, both day and night, in order to purify himself. James, he who was called the "brother of the Lord," practised similar asceticism.<sup>427</sup> Later, about the end of the first century, Baptism was at enmity with Christianity, especially in Asia Minor. The author of the writings attributed to John the evangelist appears to combat it in an indirect way.<sup>428</sup> One of the Sibylline poems <sup>429</sup> seems to emanate from this school. As to the sects of Hemero-baptists, Baptists, and Elchasaïtes (*Sabiens* and *Mogtasila* of the Arabian writers),<sup>430</sup> representatives of which still survive under the name of Mendaïtes, or "Christians of St. John," they have the same origin as the movement of John the Baptist rather than an authentic descent from John. The actual school of the latter, partly mingled with Christianity, became a small Christian heresy and died out in obscurity. John had as it were a presentiment of the future. Had he yielded to a mean rivalry, he would now be forgotten in the multitude of sectaries of his time. By his self-abnegation he has attained a glorious and a unique position in the religious pantheon of humanity.

<sup>426</sup> Possibly the Bounai reckoned by the Babylonian Talmud (*Sanhedrin*, 43 a) among the disciples of Jesus.

<sup>427</sup> Hegesippus in Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 2: 23.

<sup>428</sup> John 1: 8, 26, 33; 4: 2. 1 Ep. John 5: 6; Acts 10: 47.

<sup>429</sup> Lib. 4, especially verse 157 *et seq.*

<sup>430</sup> *Sabian*, in Aramaic, is the equivalent of "Baptist"; *Mogtasila* has the same meaning in Arabic.



## CHAPTER XIII

### *First Attempts on Jerusalem*

Nearly every year Jesus went to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. The details of these journeys are little known, for the Synoptics do not speak of them,<sup>431</sup> and the notes of the fourth Gospel are, on this point, much confused.<sup>432</sup> It was, it appears, in the year 31, and certainly after the death of John, that the most important of the visits of Jesus to the capital took place. Several of the

<sup>431</sup> Still, they obscurely imply these visits. They, as well as the fourth Gospel, recognise the relations with Joseph of Arimathea. Luke (10: 38-42) knows the family of Bethany, and even hints vaguely at a plan of journeyings not unlike that mentioned by John; his itinerary, in fact (9: 51-18: 31), is so strange as to seem as if constructed from incidents of several journeys. Certain fragments—10: 25-42 (the good Samaritan and the household of Bethany); 11: 29-32, 37-41; 12: 1-11; 13: 10-17, 31-35; 14: 1-6; 15: 1, 2—seem to belong to Jerusalem or its neighbourhood. The difficulty in this view seems to result from Luke's bringing everything into the Synoptic framework, from which he does not venture to depart. The larger part of the attack on Pharisees and Sadducees, which the Synoptics represent as made in Galilee, have scarce a meaning unless at Jerusalem. Finally, the length of time which they allow from his entrance into Jerusalem to his death, though it may possibly extend to several weeks (Matt. 26: 55; Mark 14: 49), is not enough to admit all the incidents recorded. The passages in Matt. 23: 37 and Luke 13: 34 seem to confirm this view; though this, it may be urged, is a quotation, like Matt. 23: 34, referring in general terms to the various messages divinely sent to save the chosen people.

<sup>432</sup> Two pilgrimages are clearly indicated (John 2: 13, and 5: 1), besides the final journey (7: 10), after which Jesus returns no more to Galilee. The first was while John was still baptising, and would, accordingly, correspond with the Passover of A.D. 29. But the circumstances recounted belong to a later date: compare John 2: 14-17 (driving the money-changers from the Temple) with Matt. 21: 12, 13; Mark 11: 15-17; Luke 19: 45, 46. Evidently, the date has been altered in the early chapters of the fourth Gospel; or, more likely, the incidents of different journeys have been confused.

disciples accompanied him. Although Jesus, from that time, attached little importance to the pilgrimage, he conformed to it in order to avoid wounding Jewish opinion, with which, as yet, he had not broken. These journeys were moreover essential to his design; for he already felt that to play a leading part he must leave Galilee, and attack Judaism in its stronghold, Jerusalem.

There the little Galilean community was far from feeling at home: Jerusalem was then very much what it is to-day, a city of pedantry, acrimony, disputation, hatreds, and pettiness of mind. Its fanaticism was extreme, and religious seditions were very frequent. The Pharisees were in supreme power; the study of the Law, carried to consideration of the most insignificant minutiae and reduced to questions of casuistry, was the only study. Such exclusively theological and canonical culture in no respect contributed to refinement of intellect. It was somewhat analogous to the barren doctrine of the Mussulman fakir, to that empty science discussed round the mosques, which is a great expenditure of time and absolutely useless dialectic, having no value as an agent of good mental discipline. The theological education of the modern clergy, however sterile it may be, gives us no idea of this, for the Renaissance introduced into all our teaching, even into that most opposed to it, a taste for *belles lettres* and for method, which has infused a certain "human" element into scholasticism. The science of the Jewish doctor, of the *sofer* or scribe, was purely barbarous, unmitigatedly absurd, and devoid of any moral element.<sup>433</sup> To crown the evil, it filled with ridiculous pride those who had worn themselves out in its acquisition. The Jewish scribe, proud of the pretentious knowledge which had cost him so much labour, had for

<sup>433</sup> It may be judged from the Talmud, which is an echo from the Jewish schools of this time.

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Greek culture the same contempt which the learned Mussulman has at the present day for European civilisation, and which the old Catholic theologian had for the knowledge of men of the world. The tendency of scholastic culture of this kind is to close the mind to all that is refined, and to banish appreciation of anything other than those difficult triflings on which men have wasted their lives, regarding them as the natural occupation of persons professing any degree of seriousness.<sup>434</sup>

This odious society could not fail to weigh very heavily on the tender souls and upright consciences of the northern Israelites. The contempt of the Hierosolymites for the Galileans made the difference in temperament still more complete. In the beautiful Temple, the object of all their desires, they often met with nothing but affront. A verse of the pilgrim's psalm, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God" (Psalm 84:10), seemed as though expressly made for them. A disdainful priesthood laughed at their simple devotions, as formerly in Italy the clergy, familiarised with the sanctuaries, witnessed coldly, almost with amusement, the fervour of the pilgrim come from afar. The Galileans spoke a somewhat corrupt dialect; their pronunciation was vicious; they confounded the different aspirations of letters, thus making mistakes which caused much merriment.<sup>435</sup> In religion they were considered ignorant and of dubious orthodoxy<sup>436</sup>—indeed, the expression "foolish Galileans" had become proverbial.<sup>437</sup> It was believed—and not without reason—that they were not

<sup>434</sup> See Josephus, *Antiq.*, 20, 11: 2.

<sup>435</sup> Matt. 26: 73; Mark 14: 70; Acts 2: 7; Babylonian Talmud, *Erubin*, 53 a, b; *Bereschith rabba*, 26 c.

<sup>436</sup> See the passage just cited from the tract *Erubin*; Mishna, *Nedarim*, 2: 4; Jerusalem Talmud, *Schabbath* 16 (end); Babylonian Talmud, *Baba bathra*, 25 b.

<sup>437</sup> *Erubin* (l. c.) 53 b.

of pure Jewish blood; and it was a matter of course that Galilee could not produce a prophet.<sup>438</sup> Placed thus on the confines of Judaism, almost outside it, the poor Galileans had only one badly interpreted passage in Isaiah upon which to build their hopes.<sup>439</sup> "The land of Zebulon, and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, Galilee of the nations! The people which sat in darkness saw a great light: and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, to them did the light spring up."<sup>440</sup> The reputation of the native city of Jesus was particularly bad. There was a popular proverb, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"<sup>441</sup>

The very barren aspect of nature in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem must have added to the discomfort of Jesus. The valleys are without water, the soil arid and stony. Looking into the valley of the Dead Sea, the landscape is somewhat striking, but elsewhere it is monotonous. The hill of Mizpeh, around which cluster the oldest historical associations of Israel, alone relieves the eye. In the time of Jesus the city presented very much the same aspect as it does now. It had scarcely any ancient monuments, for, until the time of the Asmoneans, the Jews had remained strangers to all the arts. John Hyrcanus had begun to embellish it, and Herod the Great had made it a superb city. The Herodian constructions, by their stately elevation, perfection of execution, and beauty of materials,<sup>442</sup> may dispute superiority with the most finished works of antiquity. A large number of tombs, of original taste, were erected

<sup>438</sup> John 7: 52. It has been shown by modern criticism that two or three prophets were born in Galilee; but the facts that prove it were unknown at the time of which we speak. (See, for Elijah, Josephus, *Antiq.*, 8, 13: 2.)

<sup>439</sup> Isaiah 9: 1, 2; Matt. 4: 13-16.

<sup>440</sup> See p. 195, note 4.

<sup>441</sup> John 1: 46 (weak authority).

<sup>442</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 15: 8-11; *Wars*, 5, 5: 6. Mark 13: 1, 2.

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about the same period in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.<sup>443</sup> These monuments were Greek in style, but appropriate to Jewish customs and considerably modified in accordance with their principles. The ornamental sculptures of the human figure, in which the Herods had indulged to the great displeasure of the purists, were banished and replaced by floral decorations. The taste of the ancient inhabitants of Phœnicia and Palestine for monolithic monuments hewn in the solid rock seemed to be revived in these singular rock tombs, in which Greek styles are so strangely applied to a troglodyte architecture. Jesus, who regarded works of art as a pompous display of vanity, viewed these monuments with dislike.<sup>444</sup> His absolute spirituality and his fixed belief that the form of the old world was about to pass away, left him no taste save for things of the heart.

The Temple, at the time of Jesus, was quite new, and its exterior was not completely finished. Herod had begun its restoration in the year 20 or 21 before the Christian era, in order to make it uniform with his other buildings. The main fabric of the Temple was completed in eighteen months, the porticoes in eight years;<sup>445</sup> but the construction of the accessory portions was continued slowly, and was only finished a short time before the capture of Jerusalem.<sup>446</sup> Jesus probably saw the work in progress, not without a touch of secret vexation. Such hopes of a long future were like an insult to his approaching advent. Having clearer sight than the unbelievers and the fanatics, he

<sup>443</sup> Tombs of the Judges and Kings,—Absalom, Zechariah, Jehoshaphat, St. James (so-called). Compare the description of the tomb of the Maccabees at Modin: 1 Macc. 13: 27 (and Hist. of Israel, 11: 12).

<sup>444</sup> Matt. 23: 29; 24: 1, 2; Mark 13: 1, 2; Luke 21: 5, 6. Compare Enoch 97: 13, 14; Babylonian Talmud, *Schabbath*, 23 b.

<sup>445</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 15, 11: 5, 6.

<sup>446</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, 9: 7; John 2: 20.

foresaw that these superb buildings were destined to endure for but a short time.<sup>447</sup>

The Temple formed a marvellously imposing whole, of which the present *haram*,<sup>448</sup> notwithstanding its beauty, scarcely affords any conception. The courts and surrounding porticoes served as the daily resort of a great number of people—so much so indeed that this great open space was at once temple, forum, tribunal, and university. All the religious discussions of the Jewish schools, all the canonical instruction, even the legal business and civil actions—in a word, all the national activity, was concentrated there.<sup>449</sup> It was an arena resounding with perpetual disputations, a battle-field of arguments in which sophisms and subtle questions were to be heard on every side. Thus the Temple had many affinities with a Mohammedan mosque. The Romans, who at this period treated all foreign religions with respect, when kept within proper bounds,<sup>450</sup> refrained from entering the sanctuary; Greek and Latin inscriptions marked the point up to which those who were not Jews were permitted to go.<sup>451</sup> But the tower of Antonia, the headquarters of the Roman garrison, commanded the whole enclosure, and allowed all that passed therein to be seen.<sup>452</sup> The surveillance of the Temple was in the

<sup>447</sup> Matt. 24: 2; 26: 61; 27: 40. Mark 13: 2; 14: 58; 15: 29. Luke 21: 6; John 2: 19, 20.

<sup>448</sup> See Vogüé's *Temple de Jerusalem* (Paris, 1864). The Temple, with its courts, no doubt occupied the site of the mosque of Omar and the *haram*, or sacred enclosure around the mosque. The embankment of the *haram* is, in parts, well known as the place where the Jews gather to weep, at the very substructure of Herod's temple. [Hist. of Israel, 5: 246-249.]

<sup>449</sup> Luke 2: 46-49; Mishna, *Sanhedrin*, 10: 2; Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 41 a; *Rosch hasschana*, 31 a.

<sup>450</sup> Suetonius, *Aug.* 93.

<sup>451</sup> Philo *Leg. ad Caium*, 31. Josephus, *Wars*, 5, 5: 2; 6, 2: 4. Acts 21: 28.

<sup>452</sup> Traces of the tower of Antonia are still to be seen on the north side of the *haram*.



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hands of the Jews. The commandment, in whose charge it was, superintended the opening and shutting of the gates, and prevented any one from crossing the enclosure with a stick in his hand, or with dusty shoes, or when carrying burdens, or to shorten his path.<sup>453</sup> The Temple officials were especially scrupulous in seeing that no one entered the inner gates in a state of legal impurity. The women had, in the middle of the outer court, places reserved for them, surrounded by wooden hoardings.

It was in the Temple that Jesus spent his days during his sojourn at Jerusalem. At the time of the feasts an extraordinary concourse of people flocked into the town. In parties of ten to twenty persons the pilgrims were to be found everywhere, and lived, huddled together in the confusion in which Orientals delight.<sup>454</sup> Jesus was lost in the crowd, and his poor Galileans, grouped around him, made little impression. He probably felt that here he was in a hostile world which would receive him only with disdain. All that he saw aroused his aversion. The Temple, like largely frequented places of worship in general, offered a somewhat unedifying spectacle. The devotional services entailed a number of rather objectionable features, especially mercantile operations, for carrying on which actual shops were established within the sacred enclosure. Animals for the sacrifices were sold in them; there were tables for the exchange of money; at times the place had the aspect of a fair.<sup>455</sup> The inferior officers of the Temple no doubt fulfilled their functions with the irreligious vulgarity characteristic of sacristans at all times. This profane and careless manner of handling sacred things wounded the

<sup>453</sup> Mishna, *Berakoth*, 9: 5; Babylonian Talmud, *Jebamoth*, 6 b; Mark 11: 16.

<sup>454</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 2, 14: 3; 6, 9: 3. Psalm 133.

<sup>455</sup> Babylonian Talmud, *Rosch hasschana*, 31 a; *Sanhedrin*, 41 a; *Schabbath*, 15 a.

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religious feeling of Jesus, which, at times, was carried to an extreme of scrupulosity.<sup>456</sup> He said that they had made the house of prayer into a den of thieves. It is even related that one day, in an outbreak of wrath, he scourged the vendors with a "scourge of cords," and overturned their tables.<sup>457</sup> On the whole, he had little love for the Temple. The ideal of worship of his Father which he had conceived had nothing in common with scenes of butchery. All these old Jewish institutions displeased him, and the necessity of conforming to them gave him pain. Nor, except among the Judaising Christians, did the Temple and its site inspire devout feelings in Christian hearts. The true disciples of the new religion held the ancient sanctuary in aversion. Constantine and the first Christian emperors left the pagan buildings of Adrian standing there,<sup>458</sup> and only enemies of Christianity, such as Julian, remembered the Temple.<sup>459</sup> When Omar entered Jerusalem he found the site designedly polluted in hatred of the Jews.<sup>460</sup> It was Islamism, which was, in a manner, a revival of Judaism in its excessively Semitic form, which restored its glory. The place has always been anti-Christian.

The pride of the Jews was the element which completed the discontent of Jesus, and made his sojourn in Jerusalem painful. While the great ideas of Israel had been ripening, the priesthood had in the same measure been losing its power. The institution of synagogues had given to the interpreter of the Law, to the doctor, a great superiority over the priest. There were no priests except at Jerusalem, and even there, reduced to entirely ritualistic functions, al-

<sup>456</sup> Mark 11: 16.

<sup>457</sup> Matt. 21: 12, 13; Mark 11: 15, 16; Luke 19: 45, 46; John 2: 14-17.

<sup>458</sup> Jerome on Isaiah 2: 8 and Matt. 24: 15; *Itin. a Burdig. Hierus.*, p. 152 (ed. Schott).

<sup>459</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, 23: 1.

<sup>460</sup> Euty chius, *Ann.*, 2: 286 *et seq.* (Oxford, 1659).

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most, like our parish priests, excluded from preaching, they were surpassed by the orator of the synagogue, the casuist, and by the *sofer* or scribe, although the latter was a layman. The celebrated men of the Talmud were not priests; they were learned men according to the ideas of the time. It is true that the higher priesthood of Jerusalem held very lofty rank in the nation; but it by no means headed the religious movement. The sovereign pontiff, whose dignity had already been degraded by Herod,<sup>461</sup> became more and more a Roman functionary,<sup>462</sup> who was frequently changed in order to divide the profits of the office. Opposed to the Pharisees, who were very enthusiastic lay zealots, nearly all the priests were Sadducees, that is to say, members of the sceptical aristocracy which had gathered round the Temple, living by the altar whilst they saw its vanity.<sup>463</sup> The priestly caste had separated itself so far from national feeling and from the great religious movement which drew the people forward, that the name of "Sadducee" (*Sadoki*), which at first simply designated a member of the sacerdotal family of Sadok, had become synonymous with "materialist" and "Epicurean."

Since the reign of Herod the Great a still worse element had begun to corrupt the high-priesthood. Herod, having fallen in love with Mariamne, daughter of a certain Simon, son of Boëthus of Alexandria, and being anxious to marry her (about the year 28 B.C.), saw no other means of ennobling his father-in-law and raising him to his own rank than that of making him high-priest. This intriguing family remained masters, almost without interruption, of the sovereign pontificate for thirty-five years.<sup>464</sup> In close

<sup>461</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 15, 3: 1, 3.

<sup>462</sup> *Ibid.*, 18: 2.

<sup>463</sup> Acts 4: 1-21; 5: 17; 19: 14. Josephus, *Antiq.*, 20, 9: 1. *Pirké Aboth*, 1, 10. Comp. Tosiphta, *Menachoth*, 2.

<sup>464</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 15, 9: 3; 17, 6: 4, and 13: 1; 18, 1: 1, and 2: 1; 19, 6: 2, and 8: 1.

alliance with the reigning family, it did not lose office until after the deposition of Archelaus, and recovered it (in the year 42 of our era) when Herod Agrippa had temporarily re-established the work of Herod the Great. Thus came into being, under the name of Boëthusim,<sup>465</sup> a new sacerdotal nobility, very worldly and undevotional, which was hardly to be distinguished from the Sadokites. The Boëthusim, in the Talmud and the rabbinical writings, are depicted as unbelievers and always reproached as being Sadducees.<sup>466</sup> From all this there resulted a miniature Cardinals' College round the Temple, living on politics, very slightly moved to excesses of zeal and even suspicious of them, turning a deaf ear to the reports of holy men or reformers; for it derived profit from the continuance of the established routine. These Epicurean priests had not the violence of the Pharisees; they only wished for quietude; it was their moral indifference, their cold irreligious feeling that disgusted Jesus. Thus, although they differed widely from each other, priests and Pharisees were confounded in his antipathy. But, as a stranger lacking influence, he was long compelled to lock his discontent within himself and to express his feelings only to the intimate disciples who accompanied him.

<sup>465</sup> This name is found only in Jewish documents. In my opinion the "Herodians" of the New Testament are the Boëthusim. The account of the Herodians given by Epiphanius (20) is of little weight.

<sup>466</sup> See the treatise *Aboth Nathan*, 5; *Soferim*, 3, hal. 5; Mishna, *Menachoth*, 10: 3; Babylonian Talmud, *Schabbath*, 118 a. The name *Boëthusim* is often used interchangeably in the Talmud with *Sadducees* or the word *minim* (heretics): compare Tosiphta, *Joma*, 1, with the same treatise in Jerusalem Talmud, 1: 5, and Babylonian Talmud, 19 b; Tos. *Sukka*, 3, with the same in Babylonian Talmud, 43 b, and, further on, with 48 b; Tos. *Rosch. hasschana*, 1, with the same in Mishna, 2: 1, Jerusalem Talmud, 2: 1, and Babylonian Talmud, 122 b; Tos. *Menachoth*, 10, with Mish. 10: 3, and Babylonian Talmud, 65 a; Mishna, *Chagiga*, 2: 4, and Megillath Taanith, 1; Tos. *Iadaim*, 2, with Jerusalem Talmud, *Baba bathra*, 8: 1, and Babylonian Talmud, *ibid.* 115 b, Meg. Taan. 5. Compare also Mark 8 with Matt. 16: 6.

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Before his last stay, which was by far the longest of all that he made at Jerusalem, and terminated in his death, Jesus endeavoured however to procure a hearing. He preached; people talked about him, and discussed certain of his deeds which were regarded as miraculous. But from all this there resulted neither a Church at Jerusalem nor even a group of Hierosolymite disciples. The winning teacher who gave forgiveness to all men, provided they loved him, could not find much that was congenial in this sanctuary of vain disputations and obsolete sacrifices. The only consequence was that he formed some valuable friendships, the fruits of which he reaped later. He does not appear at this time to have made the acquaintance of the family at Bethany, which, amidst the trials of the latter months of his life, brought him so much consolation. But perhaps he had some intercourse with Mary, mother of Mark, whose house, some years later, was a place of resort for the apostles, and with Mark himself.<sup>467</sup> Soon, too, he attracted the notice of a certain Nicodemus, a wealthy Pharisee, a member of the Sanhedrim, and a man of high position in Jerusalem.<sup>468</sup> Nicodemus, who appears to have been upright and sincere, felt himself drawn towards the young Galilean. Unwilling to compromise himself, he came to see Jesus by night, and had a long conversation with him.<sup>469</sup> There can be no doubt that he kept a favourable impression of him, for he afterwards defended Jesus

<sup>467</sup> Mark 14: 51, 52, where the "young man" appears to be Mark; see also Acts 12: 12.

<sup>468</sup> He seems to be referred to in the Babylonian Talmud, *Taanith*, 20 a; *Gittin*, 56 a; *Ketuboth*, 66 b; treatise *Aboth Nathan*, 7; Midrash rabba, *Eka*, 64 a. The passage in *Taanith* identifies him with Bounai, who, according to *Sanhedrin* (see above, p. 148 n. 426), was a disciple of Jesus. But if Bounai is the Banou of Josephus, this has no weight.

<sup>469</sup> John 3: 1-12. The language of the conversation is the composition of the evangelist; but it will hardly be maintained that Nicodemus himself, with the part he plays in the life of Jesus, is an invention of his.

against the prejudices of his colleagues,<sup>470</sup> and, after the death of Jesus, we shall find him tending the corpse of the Master with pious care.<sup>471</sup> Nicodemus did not become a Christian; he believed that, as a duty to his position, he should take no part in a revolutionary movement which as yet counted no men of note amongst its adherents. But he felt great friendship for Jesus, and rendered him services, though he was unable to rescue him from a death which, even at this epoch, was all but inevitable.

As to the celebrated doctors of the time, Jesus does not appear to have had any relations with them. Hillel and Shammai were dead; the greatest contemporary authority was Gamaliel, grandson of Hillel. He was broad-minded and a man of the world, open to secular culture, and habituated to tolerance by his intercourse with good society.<sup>472</sup> Unlike the very strict Pharisees, who walked veiled or with closed eyes, he did not scruple to look upon women, even those who were pagans.<sup>473</sup> This, as well as his knowledge of Greek, was excused, since he had access to the court.<sup>474</sup> After the death of Jesus he expressed very moderate views concerning the new sect.<sup>475</sup> St. Paul belonged to his school, but it is improbable that Jesus ever entered it.<sup>476</sup>

One idea at least, brought by Jesus from Jerusalem and apparently thenceforth rooted in his mind, was that there was no understanding possible between him and the ancient Jewish religion. The abolition of the sacrifices which caused him so much disgust, the suppression of the impious and haughty priesthood, and, in a general sense, the abro-

<sup>470</sup> John 7: 50-52.

<sup>471</sup> John 19: 39.

<sup>472</sup> Mishna, *Baba metsia*, 5: 8; Babylonian Talmud, *Sota*, 49 b.

<sup>473</sup> Jerusalem Talmud, *Berakoth*, 9: 2.

<sup>474</sup> Passage of *Sota* before cited, and *Baba kama*, 83 a.

<sup>475</sup> Acts 5: 34-39.

<sup>476</sup> Acts 22: 3.



gation of the Law, seemed to him absolutely essential. From this time he no longer took his stand as a Jewish reformer, but as a destroyer of Judaism. Certain partisans of the Messianic ideas had already declared that the Messiah would bring with him a new Law, which should be common to the whole world.<sup>477</sup> The Essenes, who were not, strictly speaking, Jews, also appear to have been indifferent towards the Temple and Mosaic observances. But these were only isolated or unavowed instances of audacity. Jesus was the first who dared to say that from his time, or rather from that of John,<sup>478</sup> the Law no longer existed. If occasionally he expressed himself in more prudent terms,<sup>479</sup> it was to avoid shocking existing prejudices too violently. When driven to extremities, he flung off all disguise and declared that the Law had no longer any force. To illustrate the point he used striking comparisons. "No man putteth a piece of undressed cloth upon an old garment . . . neither do men put new wine into old wineskins."<sup>480</sup> In this we see his authoritative and creative teaching put into practice. All except Jews were excluded from the Temple and its enclosure by scornful prohibitions. Of such prohibitions Jesus did not approve. The narrow, harsh, uncharitable Law was made only for the children of Abraham. Jesus maintained that every man of good heart, every man who received and loved him, was a son of Abraham.<sup>481</sup> Pride of blood appeared to him as the great

<sup>477</sup> Sibylline Books, 3: 573 *et seq.*, 715 *et seq.*, 756-758. Compare Targum of Jonathan, Isaiah 12: 3.

<sup>478</sup> Luke 16: 16. The corresponding passage of Matthew, 11: 12, 13, is not so clear, but its meaning is the same.

<sup>479</sup> Matt. 5: 17, 18 (compare Babylonian Talmud, *Schabbath*, 116 b). This passage does not conflict with those which imply the abolition of the Law; it merely signifies that all the figures of the Old Testament are fulfilled in Jesus (comp. Luke 16: 17).

<sup>480</sup> Matt. 9: 16, 17; Luke 5: 36-39.

<sup>481</sup> Luke 19: 9.

foe that men must fight against. In other words, Jesus is no longer a Jew. He is, in the highest degree, a revolutionary; he calls all men to a worship founded solely on the ground of their being children of God. He proclaims the rights of man, not the rights of the Jew; the religion of man, not the religion of the Jew; the deliverance of man, not the deliverance of the Jew.<sup>482</sup> How far removed is this from a Gaulonite Judas or a Matthias Margaloth preaching revolution in the name of the law! The religion of humanity, based, not upon blood, but upon the heart, is founded. Moses is superseded, the Temple has no longer reason to be, and is irrevocably condemned.

<sup>482</sup> Matt. 24: 14; 28: 19. Mark 13: 10; 16: 15. Luke 24: 47.

## CHAPTER XIV

### *Intercourse with Pagans and Samaritans*

In accordance with these principles, Jesus despised all religion that was not of the heart. The vain ceremonial of devotees,<sup>483</sup> the outward display of strictness which trusted to punctiliousness for salvation, had in him a mortal enemy. He cared little for fasting.<sup>484</sup> To sacrifice he preferred the pardon of an injury.<sup>485</sup> Love of God, charity, and mutual forgiveness—in these consisted his whole law.<sup>486</sup> Nothing could be less sacerdotal. The priest, by very reason of his office, ever urges men to the public sacrifice of which he is the appointed minister; he discourages private prayer, which is a means of dispensing with his services. We should seek in vain through the Gospel for one religious rite recommended by Jesus. To him baptism was of but secondary importance;<sup>487</sup> and as to prayer, he lays down no rule, save that it should come from the heart. As always happens, many thought it possible to substitute the good-will of weakly souls for genuine love of righteousness, and imagined they could win the kingdom of heaven by saying to him, “Rabbi, Rabbi.” He rebuked them and declared that his religion consisted in doing good.<sup>488</sup> He often quoted the passage in Isaiah: “This people honour-eth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.”<sup>489</sup>

<sup>483</sup> Matt. 15: 9.

<sup>484</sup> Matt. 9: 14; 11: 19.

<sup>485</sup> Matt. 5: 23–26; 9: 13; 12: 7.

<sup>486</sup> Matt. 22: 37–40; Mark 12: 29, 30; Luke 10: 25–37.

<sup>487</sup> Matt. 28: 19, and Mark 16: 16 do not represent his real words: compare Acts 10: 47, and 1 Cor. 1: 47.

<sup>488</sup> Matt. 7: 21; Luke 6: 46.

<sup>489</sup> Matt. 15: 8; Mark 7: 6; cf. Isaiah 29: 13.

The observance of the Sabbath was the point upon which the whole edifice of Pharisaic scruples and subtleties was based. This ancient and excellent institution had become a pretext for miserable disputes among casuists, and a source of superstitious beliefs.<sup>490</sup> It was believed that nature observed it; all intermittent springs were accounted "Sabbatical."<sup>491</sup> And it was upon this point that Jesus liked best to defy his enemies.<sup>492</sup> He openly violated the Sabbath, and only desponded with subtle raillery to the reproaches heaped upon him. With still greater justification he held in contempt a multitude of modern observances added by tradition to the Law, and for precisely that reason the dearer to devotees. Ablutions and over-subtle distinctions between pure and impure things found in him a pitiless opponent: "Not that which entereth into the mouth," said he, "defileth the man; but that which proceedeth out of the mouth, this defileth the man" (Matt. 15:11). The Pharisees, who were the propagators of these mummeries, were the constant objects of his attacks. He accused them of exceeding the Law, of inventing impossible precepts, in order to create occasions of sin for men. "Blind leaders of the blind," said he; "take heed lest ye also fall into the ditch." "Ye offspring of vipers," he secretly added, "how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."<sup>493</sup>

He was not sufficiently acquainted with the Gentiles to

<sup>490</sup> See, especially, the treatise *Schabbath* of the Mishna, and the Book of Jubilees (translated from the Ethiopic in Ewald's *Jahrbücher*, years 2, 3), chap. 1.

<sup>491</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 7, 5: 1; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, 31: 18; compare "The Land and the Book" (Thomson), 1: 406.

<sup>492</sup> Matt. 12: 1-14. Mark 2: 23-28. Luke 6: 1-5; 13: 14-17; 14: 1-6.

<sup>493</sup> Matt. 12: 34; 15: 1-9, 12-14; 23. Mark 7: 1, 8, 15, 16. Luke 6: 45; 11: 39-44.

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think of founding any lasting results on their conversion. In Galilee there was a great number of pagans, but apparently no public and organised worship of false gods.<sup>494</sup> Jesus could see this worship displayed in all its splendour in the country of Tyre and Sidon, at Cæsarea Philippi and in the Decapolis,<sup>495</sup> but he gave it little attention. In him we never find the tiresome pedantry of his Jewish contemporaries, those invectives against idolatry, so familiar to his co-religionists from the time of Alexander, of which, for instance, the Book of Wisdom is full.<sup>496</sup> What impressed him in the pagans was not their idolatry but their servility.<sup>497</sup> The young Jewish democrat, in this matter the brother of Judas the Gaulonite, acknowledging no master save God, was deeply hurt at the honours with which they surrounded the persons of sovereigns, and the frequently mendacious titles given to the latter. With this exception, in the greater number of instances in which he has relations with pagans, he shows great indulgence towards them. At times he professes to conceive more hope for them than for the Jews.<sup>498</sup> The kingdom of God is to be transferred to them. "When therefore the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do unto those husbandmen? . . . He will miserably destroy those miserable men, and will let out the vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons."<sup>499</sup> Jesus

<sup>494</sup> The Pagans of Galilee were mostly, I think, on the boundaries,—Kadesh, for example,—while the heart of the country, except the city of Tiberias, was wholly Jewish. The line where ruins of temples end and those of synagogues begin is plainly marked at Lake Hulek (Sama-chonitis or Merom). Traces of Pagan sculpture, thought to be found at Tell-Hum, are doubtful. The sea-coast, the town of Acra in particular, made no part of Galilee.

<sup>495</sup> See *ante*, pp. 184, 185.

<sup>496</sup> Chaps. 8, 14.

<sup>497</sup> Matt. 20: 25; Mark 10: 42; Luke 22: 25.

<sup>498</sup> Matt. 8: 5-10; 15: 22-28. Mark 7: 25-30. Luke 4: 25-27.

<sup>499</sup> Matt. 21: 41; Mark 12: 9; Luke 20: 16.

adhered the more to this idea inasmuch as the conversion of the Gentiles was, according to Jewish ideas, one of the surest signs of the advent of the Messiah.<sup>500</sup> In his kingdom of God he represents, seated at the feast by the side of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, men come from the four winds of heaven, whilst the lawful heirs of the kingdom are rejected.<sup>501</sup> Frequently, it is true, there appears to be an entirely contrary tendency in the commands given by him to his disciples; he seems to enjoin them to preach salvation to the orthodox Jews alone;<sup>502</sup> he speaks of pagans in a manner conformable to Jewish prejudices.<sup>503</sup> But it must be remembered that the disciples, whose narrow minds were not adapted to such supreme indifference for the privileges of the sons of Abraham, may have moulded their Master's teaching in accordance with their own ideas.<sup>504</sup> And besides it is very possible that Jesus may have expressed diverse views on this matter, just as Mahomet speaks of the Jews in the Koran, sometimes in the most honourable manner, sometimes with extreme harshness, as he had hopes of winning them over to him or not. Tradition, in fact, attributes to Jesus two entirely opposite rules of proselytism, which, it is possible, he may have put in practice alternately. "He that is not against us is for us." "He that is not with me is against me."<sup>505</sup> A passionate struggle almost necessarily involves contradictions of this nature.

<sup>500</sup> Isaiah 2: 2, 3, and 60; Amos 9: 11, 12; Jer. 3: 17; Mal. 1: 11; Tobit 13: 13, 16; Orac. Sibyll. 3: 715 *et seq.* Comp. Matt. 24: 14; Acts 15: 15-17.

<sup>501</sup> Matt. 8: 11, 12; 21: 33-43; 22: 1-14.

<sup>502</sup> Matt. 7: 6; 10: 5, 6; 15: 24; 21: 43.

<sup>503</sup> Matt. 5: 46-48; 6: 7, 32; 18: 17. Luke 6: 32-36; 12: 30.

<sup>504</sup> What leads us to think so is that the really authentic words of Jesus, the *Logia* of Matthew, are of universal moral application, and have no savour of the Jewish devotee.

<sup>505</sup> Matt. 12: 3; Mark 9: 39; Luke 9: 50; 11: 23.



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It is certain that among his disciples he counted many men whom the Jews called "Hellenes."<sup>506</sup> In Palestine this word had very diverse meanings. Occasionally it designated pagans; occasionally Jews, speaking Greek, and dwelling amongst pagans;<sup>507</sup> occasionally people of pagan origin converted to Judaism.<sup>508</sup> It was probably in the last named category of Hellenes that Jesus found sympathy.<sup>509</sup> Affiliation to Judaism had many degrees, but the proselytes always remained in a state of inferiority to the Jew by birth. They were called "proselytes of the gate," or "men fearing God," and were subject to the precepts of Noah, not to those of Moses.<sup>510</sup> This very inferiority was no doubt the cause that attracted Jesus to them, and won them his favour.

The Samaritans received the same treatment at his hands. Shut in, like a small island, between the two great provinces of Judaism, Judæa and Galilee, Samaria formed in Palestine a kind of enclosure in which was preserved the ancient worship of Gerizim, closely resembling and rivalling that of Jerusalem. This poor sect, which had neither the genius nor the learned organisation of Judaism proper was treated by the Temple-worshippers with extreme severity.<sup>511</sup> They classed its adherents with pagans but hated them more.<sup>512</sup> Jesus, by a reaction of feeling, was well disposed towards

<sup>506</sup> Josephus says this definitely (*Antiq.*, 18, 3: 3), where there is no reason to suspect a change in the text. Compare John 7: 35; 12: 20, 21.

<sup>507</sup> Jerusalem Talmud, *Sota*, 7: 1.

<sup>508</sup> See John 7: 35; 12: 20. Acts 14: 1; 17: 4; 18: 4; 21: 28.

<sup>509</sup> John 12: 20; Acts 8: 27.

<sup>510</sup> Mishna, *Baba metsia*, 9: 12. Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 56 b. Acts 8: 27; 10: 2, 22, 35; 13: 16, 26, 43, 50; 16: 14; 17: 4, 17; 18: 7. Gal. 2: 3. Josephus, *Antiq.*, 14, 7: 2. Lévy, *Epigr. Beiträge zur Gesch. der Juden*, 311 et seq.

<sup>511</sup> Eccles. 1: 27, 28. John 8: 48. Josephus, *Antiq.*, 9, 14: 3; 11, 8: 6; 12, 5: 5. Jerusalem Talmud, *Aboda Zara*, 5: 4; *Pesachin*, 1: 1.

<sup>512</sup> Matt. 10: 5; Luke 17: 18; comp. Babylonian Talmud, *Cholin*, 6 a.

them. Frequently he shows a preference for the Samaritans over the orthodox Jews. If at other times he seems to forbid his disciples to preach to them, keeping his Gospel for the pure Israelites,<sup>513</sup> this was probably another precept, occasioned by special circumstances, to which the apostles have given too absolute a meaning. Sometimes in fact the Samaritans received him badly, supposing him to be full of the prejudices of his co-religionists<sup>514</sup>—just as in our own time the European freethinker is regarded as an enemy by the Mussulman, who invariably believes him to be a fanatical Christian. Jesus knew how to rise above such misconceptions.<sup>515</sup> He apparently had several disciples at Shechem, and he spent at least two days there.<sup>516</sup> On one occasion he met with gratitude and true piety only in the house of a Samaritan.<sup>517</sup> One of his most beautiful parables is that of the man who was wounded on the way to Jericho. A priest passes by and sees him, but goes on his way; a Levite also passes, but does not stop; a Samaritan takes pity on him, goes up to him, and pours oil into his wounds and bandages them.<sup>518</sup> From this Jesus argues that true brotherhood is established among them by charity and not by religious creeds. The “neighbour,” who in Judaism is first of all the co-religionist,<sup>519</sup> is for him the man who has pity on his kind without distinction of sect.

<sup>513</sup> Matt. 10: 5, 6.

<sup>514</sup> Luke 9: 53.

<sup>515</sup> Luke 9: 56.

<sup>516</sup> John 4: 39–43. What leaves some doubt upon this passage is that Luke and the writer of the fourth Gospel, who are both anti-Judaists and disposed to show that Jesus was favourable to Gentiles, are the only ones who speak of relations between Jesus and the Samaritans, and in this appear to contradict Matthew 10: 5.

<sup>517</sup> Luke 17: 16–19.

<sup>518</sup> Luke 10: 30–35.

<sup>519</sup> The passage in Levit. 19: 18, 33, 34, shows a broader feeling; but the circle of Jewish brotherhood narrowed more and more: see the dictionary, *Aruch*, under the word *בן בריה*.

Human brotherhood in its widest sense overflows through all his teaching.

These thoughts, which beset Jesus on his departure from Jerusalem, found vivid expression in an anecdote which has been preserved regarding his return.<sup>520</sup> The road from Jerusalem to Galilee passes at a distance of half-an-hour's journey from Shechem,<sup>521</sup> now Nablous, in front of the entrance to the valley commanded by Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. This route was usually avoided by Jewish pilgrims, who, in their journeys, preferred to make a long detour through Perea, rather than expose themselves to the insults of the Samaritans or ask anything of them. Eating or drinking with them was forbidden.<sup>522</sup> One of the axioms of certain casuists was, "a piece of Samaritan bread is the flesh of swine."<sup>523</sup> When they followed this route, provisions were always stored beforehand; yet conflict and ill-treatment were rarely avoided.<sup>524</sup> Jesus shared neither scruples nor fears of this nature. Having in his journey reached the point at which the valley of Shechem opens out on the left, he felt weary and stopped near a well. Then as now the Samaritans were accustomed to give names drawn from patriarchal tradition to all the places in their valley. They regarded this well as having been given by Jacob to Joseph; it was probably the same well that is called *Bir-Iakoub*. The disciples entered the valley and went to the city to buy food. Jesus sat down at the side of the well, facing Gerizim.

It was about noon. A woman belonging to Shechem came to draw water. Jesus asked her to let him drink,

<sup>520</sup> John 4: 4-42.

<sup>521</sup> Now *Naplouse*. That "Sychar" is Shechem follows from comparing John 4: 5 with Gen. 33: 19; 48: 22; and Josh. 24: 32.

<sup>522</sup> Luke 9: 53; John 4: 9.

<sup>523</sup> Mishna, *Schebiit*, 8: 10, repeated elsewhere in the Talmud.

<sup>524</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 20, 5: 1; *Wars*, 2, 12: 3; *Life*, 52.

which caused her great astonishment, since the Jews, as a rule, forbade all intercourse with Samaritans. Impressed by the conversation of Jesus, the woman recognised in him a prophet, and, expecting to hear reproaches about her worship, she anticipated them: "Sir," said she, "I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus saith unto her, "Woman believe me, the hour cometh when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father. . . . But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth." <sup>525</sup>

On the day when he said these words he was truly Son of God. For the first time he gave utterance to the saying upon which will rest the edifice of eternal religion. He founded that pure worship, not of one faith and not of one land, which all men lofty of soul will practise till the end of time. Not only was his religion on that day the best religion of humanity, it was the absolute religion; and if it be that other planets have dwellers dowered with reason and morality, their religion cannot be different from that which Jesus proclaimed by the well of Jacob. Man has not been able to maintain the position, for the ideal is but transitorily realised. This saying of Jesus has been a great light amidst the darkness of night; eighteen hundred years

<sup>525</sup> John 4: 21-23. We need not insist upon the historical accuracy of this conversation, which can have been reported only by Jesus or by the woman herself. But the narrative of this chapter certainly represents one of the inmost thoughts of Jesus, and most of the circumstances have a strong stamp of truth. The 22d verse ("Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews"), which expresses a thought opposed to verses 21, 23, seems an awkward interpolation of the writer, alarmed at the boldness of the saying he reports. This circumstance, with the feebleness of the remainder of the passage, is no small additional reason for thinking that these verses (21, 23) are really the words of Jesus.

have been necessary for the eyes of mankind—what do I say! of an infinitely small part of mankind—to have grown accustomed to it. But the light will increase to the fulness of day, and, after having traversed all the cycles of error, mankind will return to this saying, as to the immortal expression of its faith and its hope.

## CHAPTER XV

### *Legends Concerning the Messiah*

Jesus returned to Galilee full of revolutionary ardour, and with his Jewish faith completely lost. His ideas are now expressed with perfect clarity. The innocent aphorisms of his prophetic period, borrowed in part from Jewish rabbis preceding him, and the beautiful moral precepts of his second period, culminate in a decided policy. The Law is to be abolished, and it is he that will abolish it.<sup>526</sup> The Messiah is come, and it is he that is the Messiah.<sup>527</sup> The kingdom of God is about to be revealed, and it is he that will reveal it. He knew well that he would be the victim of his own audacity; but the kingdom of God could not be conquered without violence; it was by crises and rending of hearts that it had to be established.<sup>528</sup> The Son of man after his death would come again in glory, attended by legions of angels, and those who had rejected him would be confounded.

The daring of a conception such as this must not surprise us. For a long time Jesus had been accustomed to regard his relations with God as those of a son with his

<sup>526</sup> The hesitation of his immediate disciples, of whom a considerable part continued faithful to Judaism, offers serious difficulties to this explanation. But his trial leaves no room to doubt. As we shall see, he was treated by the Sanhedrin as a "deceiver" (misleader). The Talmud gives this procedure as an example of what should be followed against "misleaders" who seek to overthrow the law of Moses (Jerusalem Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 14: 16; Babylonian Talmud, *ibid.* 43 a, 67a). Compare Acts 6: 13, 14.

<sup>527</sup> The progress of his declarations on this point may be seen by coming Matt. 16: 13-20; Mark 1: 24, 25, 34, 8: 27-30, and 14: 61, 62; Luke 9: 18-22.

<sup>528</sup> Matt. 11: 12.



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father. What in others would be insupportable pride must not in him be looked upon as presumption.

The title of "Son of David" was the first which he accepted,<sup>529</sup> probably without participating in the innocent frauds by which it was sought to secure it to him. The family of David was apparently long since extinct;<sup>530</sup> neither the Asmoneans from their priestly origin, nor Herod, nor the Romans dreamed for a moment that any representative whatever of the ancient dynasty was living in their midst. But since the close of the Asmonean dynasty the dream of an unknown descendant of the ancient kings, who should avenge the nation on its enemies, had been exercising all men's minds. The universal belief was that the Messiah would be the son of David,<sup>531</sup> and, like him, would be born at Bethlehem.<sup>532</sup> The first idea of Jesus was not precisely this. His heavenly reign had nothing in common with the memories of David, which were uppermost in the minds of the majority of the Jews. He believed himself the son of God and not the son of David. His kingdom and the deliverance which he meditated were of quite another order. But public opinion on this point made him, as it were, do violence to himself. The immediate consequence of the proposition, "Jesus is the Mes-

<sup>529</sup> Rom. 1: 3. Rev. 5: 5; 22: 16.

<sup>530</sup> It is true that certain doctors, such as Hillel and Gamaliel, are given out as of the race of David; but these assertions are very doubtful (see Jerusalem Talmud, *Taanith*, 4: 2). If the house of David still formed a distinct and well-known group, how is it that it never appears side by side with the sons of Zadok, the Boëthusim, the Asmoneans, the family of Herod, in the great struggles of the time? Hegesippus and Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3: 19, 20) give only an echo of the Christian tradition.

<sup>531</sup> Matt. 22: 42; Mark 12: 35; Luke 1: 32; Acts 2: 29-36; 4 Esdras 12: 32 (in the Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopian, and Armenian versions). "Ben-David" in the Talmud often denotes the Messiah (e. g. Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 97 a).

<sup>532</sup> Matt. 2: 5, 6; John 7: 41, 42. This was quite arbitrarily founded upon the passage (perhaps altered) in Micah 5: 2; compare the Targum of Jonathan. The primitive Hebrew text was probably *Beth-Ephrata*.

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siah," was the farther proposition, "Jesus is the Son of David." He permitted a title to be given him, lacking which he could hope for no success. He ended, it would seem, by taking pleasure in it, for he showed most willingness in performing the miracles which were asked of him by those who used this title in addressing him.<sup>533</sup> In this, as in many other circumstances of his life, Jesus yielded to the current ideas of the age, even although they were not precisely his own. With his doctrine of the "kingdom of God" he associated all that could warm the heart and imagination. It was thus that we have seen him adopt the baptism of John, although it could have been but of slight importance to him.

One great difficulty presented itself—his birth at Nazareth, which was of public notoriety. We do not know whether Jesus combated this objection. Perhaps it did not come to light in Galilee, where the idea that the Son of David should be a Bethlehemite was less widely diffused. To the Galilean enthusiast moreover the title of Son of David was sufficiently justified, if he to whom it was given revived the glory of his race and brought back the great days of Israel. Did Jesus authorise by his silence the fictitious genealogies that arose in the imaginations of his partisans to prove his royal descent?<sup>534</sup> Did he know anything of the legends invented to demonstrate his birth at Bethlehem,<sup>535</sup> and particularly of the artifice by which his Bethlehemite origin was connected with the census which had taken place by order of Quirinius, the imperial

<sup>533</sup> Matt. 9: 27; 13: 23; 15: 22; 20: 30, 31. Mark 10: 47, 52. Luke 18: 33.

<sup>534</sup> Matt. 1: 1-16; Luke 3: 23-38.

<sup>535</sup> It is curious, too, that there was a *Bethlehem* some three or four leagues from Nazareth: Joshua 19: 15, and Van de Velde's map. ["It was discovered by Dr. Robinson at *Beit-lahm*, six miles west of Nazareth."] ]

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legate? <sup>536</sup> We cannot tell. The inexactitude and the contradictions of the genealogies <sup>537</sup> lead one to think that they were the result of popular imagination working on various points, and that none were sanctioned by Jesus. <sup>538</sup> He never designated himself Son of David. His disciples, much less enlightened than he, frequently magnified what he said of himself; but, as a rule, he had no knowledge of these exaggerations. It should be added that, during the first three centuries, considerable portions of Christendom <sup>539</sup> persistently denied the royal descent of Jesus and the authenticity of the genealogies.

The legends about him were thus the fruits of a great and entirely spontaneous conspiracy, and grew up around him while he was still alive. No great historical event has occurred without having given rise to a cycle of myths; and Jesus could not have prevented these popular creations, even had he wished to do so. Perhaps an acute observer would have recognised at this point the appearance of the germ of the narratives which were to attribute to him a supernatural birth, <sup>540</sup> founded, it may be, on the idea, which

<sup>536</sup> Matt. 2: 1-6; Luke 2: 1-4.

<sup>537</sup> The two genealogies completely contradict each other, and have little in common with those of the Old Testament. The story of Luke about the census of Quirinius is in defiance of dates (see *note* on p. 18). The legend would naturally fortify itself by this circumstance. The Jews were strongly impressed by the taking of a census, which confused their narrow notions; and they long kept the memory of it (cf. Acts 5: 37).

<sup>538</sup> Julius Africanus (in Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 1: 7) supposes that the kindred of Jesus, after taking refuge in Batanæa, made the attempt to reconstruct the genealogies.

<sup>539</sup> The Ebionites, Hebrews, and Nazarenes, with Tatian and Marcion: Epiphan. 29: 9; 30: 3, 14; 46: 1; Theodoret, *Hæret. jab.* 1: 20; Isadore of Pelusium, *Epist.* 1: 371, and Pansophium.

<sup>540</sup> Matt. 1: 18-23; Luke 1: 26-35. This was certainly not a universally received opinion in the first century, since Jesus is called, without reserve, the "son of Joseph," and both the genealogies constructed to connect him with the line of David are those of Joseph (cf. Gal. 4: 4; Rom. 1: 3).

was very prevalent in antiquity, that the incomparable man could not be born of ordinary sexual relations; or adapted to correspond to an imperfectly understood chapter of Isaiah,<sup>541</sup> which, it was believed, foretold that the Messiah should be born of a virgin; or lastly, perhaps, occasioned by the belief that the "breath of God," already given a divine hypostasis, was a principle of fecundity.<sup>542</sup> Even at this time there was possibly current more than one anecdote about his childhood, conceived with the intention of showing in his life the accomplishment of the Messianic ideal,<sup>543</sup> or rather of the prophecies which the allegorical exegesis of the period referred to the Messiah. A generally accepted idea was that the Messiah would be announced by a star,<sup>544</sup> that messengers from distant peoples would come at his birth to render him homage and bring him gifts.<sup>545</sup> It was supposed that this prophecy was accomplished by so-called Chaldæan astrologers said to have come about that time to Jerusalem.<sup>546</sup> On other occasions they attributed to him relations, from his very cradle, with celebrated men, such as John the Baptist, Herod the Great, and two aged persons, Simeon and Anna, who had left memories of great sanctity.<sup>547</sup> A somewhat loose chronology characterised these combinations, which, for the most part, were founded on real facts in a travestied form.<sup>548</sup> But a singular spirit of gentleness and goodness,

<sup>541</sup> Isaiah 7: 14; cf. Matt. 1: 22, 23.

<sup>542</sup> Gen. 1: 2. For the similar idea among the Egyptians, see Herodotus 3: 28; Pomponius Mela, 1: 9; Plutarch, *Quæst. Symp.*, 8, 1: 3; *De Iside et Osir*, 43; Mariette, *Mem. sur la mère d'Apis* (Paris, 1856).

<sup>543</sup> Matt. 1: 15, 23; Is. 7: 14-16.

<sup>544</sup> Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, Levi, 18. The name (or title) Bar-Cochab assumes this belief. Jerusalem Talmud, *Taanith*, 4: 8; see Num. 24: 17.

<sup>545</sup> Isaiah 60: 3; Ps. 72: 10.

<sup>546</sup> Matt. 2: 1, 2.

<sup>547</sup> Luke 2: 25, 26 (slight authority).

<sup>548</sup> Thus the legend of the slaughter of babes at Bethlehem probably

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a profoundly popular feeling informed all these fables, and made them supplemental to his teaching.<sup>549</sup> It was especially after the death of Jesus that such narratives became elaborately developed; it may be supposed however that they were already in circulation during his lifetime, and met with nothing but pious credulity and simple admiration.

That Jesus ever dreamed of making himself pass for an incarnation of God is a matter about which no doubt can exist. Such an idea was entirely foreign to the Jewish mind; there is no trace of it in the synoptic Gospels,<sup>550</sup> and we only find it indicated in certain portions of the fourth Gospel, which can least be accepted as echoing the thoughts of Jesus. At times Jesus even seems to take precautions to controvert such a doctrine.<sup>551</sup> The accusation that he made himself God, or the equal of God, is presented, even in the fourth Gospel, as a Jewish calumny.<sup>552</sup> In this last Gospel he declares himself to be less than his Father.<sup>553</sup> Elsewhere he avows that the Father has not revealed all to him.<sup>554</sup> He believes himself to be more than an ordinary man, but separated by an infinite distance from God. He is the Son of God, but all men are, or may become so in divers degrees.<sup>555</sup> Every man, day by day, should call God his Father; all who are raised again will

reflects some cruelty practised by Herod in that locality (see Josephus, *Antiq.*, 14, 9: 4; *Wars*, 1: 33: 6).

<sup>549</sup> Matt. 1: 2; Luke 1: 2; Justin, *Tryph.*, 78: 106; *Protevang.* of James (apocr.), 18-20.

<sup>550</sup> Some passages (as Acts 2: 22) absolutely exclude it.

<sup>551</sup> Matt. 4: 10; 7: 21; 22; 19: 17. Mark 1: 44; 3: 12; 10: 17, 18; Luke 18: 19.

<sup>552</sup> John 5: 18-20; 10: 33-36.

<sup>553</sup> John 14: 28.

<sup>554</sup> Mark 13: 35.

<sup>555</sup> Matt. 5: 9, 45. Luke 3: 38; 6: 35; 20: 36. John 1: 12, 13; 10: 34, 35. Acts 17: 28, 29. Rom. 8: 14-17, 19, 21, 23; 9: 26. 2 Cor. 6: 18. Gal. 3: 26; 4: 1-7. Phil. 2: 15. Ep. of Barnabas, 14 (p. 10, Hilgenfeld: Cod. Sinait.) Also, Deut. 14: 1; Wisdom 2: 13, 18.

be Sons of God.<sup>556</sup> Divine sonship was, in the Old Testament, attributed to human beings without equality with God being also attributed to them.<sup>557</sup> The word "son" has the widest meanings in the Semitic language and in that of the New Testament.<sup>558</sup> And besides, the idea of man held by Jesus does not conform to the moderate estimate which has been introduced by a cold deism. In his poetic conception of nature one breath alone suspires through the universe; the breath of man is that of God; God dwells in man, and lives by man, even as man dwells in God, and lives by God.<sup>559</sup> The transcendental idealism of Jesus never permitted him a very clear impression of his own personality. He is his Father, his Father is he. He lives in his disciples; everywhere he is with them;<sup>560</sup> his disciples are one even as he and his Father are one.<sup>561</sup> The idea to him is everything; the body, which makes distinctions of persons, is naught.

The designation "Son of God," or simply "Son,"<sup>562</sup> thus became for Jesus a term analogous to "Son of man," and, like that, synonymous with the "Messiah," the only difference being that he called himself "Son of man," and does not appear to have made the same use of the title,

<sup>556</sup> Luke 20: 36.

<sup>557</sup> Gen. 6: 2. Job 1: 6; 2: 1; 28: 7. Ps. 2: 7; 82: 6. 2 Sam. 7: 14.

<sup>558</sup> Children (sons) of the Devil (Matt. 13: 38; Acts 13: 10); children of this world (Mark 3: 17; Luke 16: 8, and 20: 34); children of light (Luke 16: 8; John 12: 36); children of the resurrection (Luke 20: 36); children of the kingdom (Matt. 8: 12; 13: 38); children of the bridegroom (Matt. 9: 15; Mark 2: 19; Luke 5: 34); children of Gehenna (Matt. 23: 15); sons of peace (Luke 10: 6), etc. The pagan Zeus, we remember, is *πατήρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε*.

<sup>559</sup> Compare Acts 17: 28.

<sup>560</sup> Matt. 18: 20; 28: 20.

<sup>561</sup> John 10: 30; 13: 21; and, in general, the last discourses reported in this Gospel, especially chap. 17, which well expresses one phase of the mind of Jesus,—though these cannot be regarded as genuine historical documents.

<sup>562</sup> The passages exemplifying this are too numerous for citation.



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“Son of God.”<sup>563</sup> “Son of man” expressed his character as judge, “Son of God” his participation in the heavenly government and his power. This power has no limits. His Father has given him all power. He has a right to alter even the Sabbath.<sup>564</sup> None can know the Father save through him;<sup>565</sup> and to him the Father has granted the right to judge.<sup>566</sup> Nature obeys him; but she also obeys all who believe and pray, for faith can do all things.<sup>567</sup>

It must be remembered that no conception of natural laws entered either his mind or those of his hearers to mark the bounds of the impossible. Those who witnessed his miracles glorified God “which had given such power unto men.”<sup>568</sup> He granted remission of sins;<sup>569</sup> he was greater than David and Abraham, and Solomon, and the prophets.”<sup>570</sup> We do not know in what form, or to what extent, these affirmations of himself were made. Jesus is not to be judged by the law of our petty conventionalities. His disciples’ admiration overwhelmed him and carried him away. It is evident that the title of “Rabbi,” with which he was at first contented, no longer sufficed him; even the title of prophet or messenger of God corresponded no longer with his ideas. The position he attributed to himself was that of a superhuman being, and he wished to be regarded as possessing a higher relationship with God than other men. But it is to be remarked that the words “super-

<sup>563</sup> Jesus uses the expression “Son of God,” or “Son,” as equivalent to “I,” only in the fourth Gospel. The Synoptics use it only indirectly (Matt. 11: 27 and 28: 19; Mark 13: 32; Luke 10: 22). Besides, the first and last of these citations represent in the synoptic system a late interpolation conformed to the type of the Johannine discourse.

<sup>564</sup> Matt. 12: 8; Luke 6: 5.

<sup>565</sup> Matt. 12: 27; 28: 18. Luke 10: 22.

<sup>566</sup> John 5: 22.

<sup>567</sup> Matt. 17: 18, 19; Luke 17: 6.

<sup>568</sup> Matt. 9: 8.

<sup>569</sup> Matt. 9: 2-8; Mark 2: 5-9; Luke 5: 20, and 7: 47, 48.

<sup>570</sup> Matt. 12: 41, 42; 22: 43-45. Mark 12: 6. John 8: 25, 26.

human" and "supernatural," borrowed from our petty theology, were meaningless in the lofty religious consciousness of Jesus. To him nature and human development were not limited kingdoms external to God—paltry realities subject to laws of hopeless rigour. There was no supernatural for him, because there was no nature. Intoxicated with infinite love, he forgot the heavy chain which binds the spirit captive; at one bound he cleared the abyss, impassable to the many, which the weakness of human faculties has made between man and God.

In these affirmations of Jesus we cannot but discover the germ of the doctrine which was later to make him a divine hypostasis,<sup>571</sup> by identifying him with the "Word," or "second God,"<sup>572</sup> or "eldest Son of God," or the "Angel Metathronos," which Jewish theology had created from another point of view.<sup>573</sup> In a measure Jewish theology was compelled to soften the extreme rigour of the older monotheism, by placing beside God an assessor to whom the

<sup>571</sup> See especially John 14 and the succeeding chapters.

<sup>572</sup> Philo in Eusebius, *Præpar. evang.*, 7: 13.

<sup>573</sup> See Philo, *De migr. Abraham*, § 1; *Quod Deus immut.* § 6; *De confus. ling.* §§ 14, 28; *De profugis*, § 20; *De somniis*, 1, § 37; *De agric. Noë*, § 12; *Quis rerum divin. hæres.* §§ 25, 26, 48, *et seq.* "Metathronos" (μετάθρονος: that is, sharing the throne of God) is a sort of divine secretary, or accountant, holding the record of merits and faults: *Bereschith rabba*, 5: 6 c; Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 38 b; *Chagiga*, 15 a: Targum of Jonathan, Gen. 5: 24. This theory of the *Logos* contains no Greek elements. The analogies that have been supposed in it with the *Honover* of the Parsees are also without foundation. The *Minokhired*, or "Divine Intelligence," is much like the Jewish *Logos*: see fragments of the book called *Minokhired* in Spiegel, *Parsi-Grammatik*, pp. 161, 162. But the development of the doctrine of the *Minokhired* among the Parsees is modern, and may imply a foreign influence. The "divine intelligence" (*Mainyu-Khratu*) appears in the *Zendic* books, but without serving as the basis of a theory; it only enters into certain invocations. The analogies which have been sought between the Jewish or Christian theory of the Word (Λόγος) and certain points of Egyptian theology may be not wholly valueless; but there is no evidence that this theory was borrowed from Egypt.

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eternal Father was supposed to delegate the government of the universe. The belief that certain men were incarnations of divine faculties or "powers" began to spread. About the same period the Samaritans possessed a thau-maturgist whom they identified with the "great power of God."<sup>574</sup> For nearly two centuries the speculative minds of Judaism had yielded to a tendency to personify specifically the divine attributes and certain expressions relating to the Deity. Thus the "Breath of God," to which frequent reference is made in the Old Testament, came to be considered a being apart—the Holy Spirit. In like manner the "Wisdom of God" and the "Word of God" became distinct personalities. This was the germ of the process from which have sprung the *Sephiroth* of the Cab-bala, the *Æons* of Gnosticism, the Christian hypostases, and all the barren mythology, consisting of personified abstractions, to which monotheism must have recourse when it desires to pluralise God.

Jesus apparently remained a stranger to these theological subtleties, which were soon to fill the world with sterile disputations. Of the metaphysical theory of the Word, as it is to be found in the writings of his contemporary, Philo, in the Chaldean *Targummim*, and, even at this date, in the Book of Wisdom, no glimpse can be caught either in the *Logia* of Matthew, or in general in the Synoptics, the authentic interpreters of the words of Jesus. The doctrine of the Word in fact had nothing in common with Messianism. The Word of Philo and the *Targummim* is in no sense the Messiah. It was in later times that Jesus was identified with the Word, and that an entire new theology, very different from that of the "kingdom of God," was

<sup>574</sup> Acts 8: 10.

<sup>575</sup> Wisdom, 9: 1, 2; 16: 12; compare with 7: 12; 8: 5, 6; 9-11. These impersonations of Wisdom are found also in much older books—Proverbs 8 and 9; Job 28.

created.<sup>576</sup> The essential character of the Word is that of creator and of providence; but Jesus never professed to have created the world or to govern it. His office was to be its judge and to regenerate it. The position of presiding judge at the final assizes of mankind was that which Jesus assigned to himself, and the character which all the first Christians attributed to him.<sup>577</sup> Until the great day he was to sit at the right hand of God, as his *Metathronos*, his prime minister, and his future avenger.<sup>578</sup> The super-human Christ of the Byzantine *Absides*, seated as judge of the world, in the midst of apostles of the same rank as himself, and higher than the angels, who only stand by and serve,—such is the exact pictorial rendering of that conception of the Son of man, the principal features of which we find so strongly indicated even in the Book of Daniel.

At all events the strictness of a studied scholastic theology had no existence in such a state of society. The whole group of ideas which we have just noted formed, in the minds of the disciples, a theological system so little settled that, according to them, the Son of God, who is a kind of divine double, acts purely as man. He is tempted, he is ignorant of many things, he disciplines himself, he changes his opinion,<sup>579</sup> he is cast down and discouraged, he is submissive as a son to God.<sup>580</sup> He who is to judge the world knows not the day of judgment.<sup>581</sup> He

<sup>576</sup> Rev. 19: 13; John 1: 1-14. It will be further noted that even in the fourth Gospel the expression "Word" nowhere occurs excepting in the proem, and is never put by the writer in the mouth of Jesus.

<sup>577</sup> Acts 10: 42; Rom. 2: 16; 2 Cor. 5: 10.

<sup>578</sup> Matt. 26: 64; Mark 16: 19; Luke 22: 69; Acts 7: 55; Rom. 8: 34; Eph. 1: 20; Col. 3: 1; Heb. 1: 3, 13; 8: 1; 10: 12, and 12: 2; 1 Pet. 3: 22; with the passages before cited on the office of the Jewish *Metathronos*.

<sup>579</sup> Matt. 10: 5, compared with 28: 19; Mark 7: 24, 27, 29.

<sup>580</sup> Matt. 26: 39; Mark 14: 32-38; Luke 22: 41-44; John 12: 27.

<sup>581</sup> Mark 13: 32; cf. Matt. 24: 36.

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takes precautions for his safety.<sup>582</sup> Soon after his birth, it is found necessary to conceal him from powerful men who desire to slay him.<sup>583</sup> In exorcisms, the devil cheats him, and does not come forth at the first command.<sup>584</sup> In his miracles, we are sensible of painful effort—of exhaustion, as though something went out of him.<sup>585</sup> All these are simply the deeds of a messenger of God, of a man protected and favoured by God.<sup>586</sup> Neither logic nor sequence are to be sought here. The need which Jesus had of gaining reputation, and the enthusiasm of his disciples, caused contradictory notions to accumulate. To men specially filled with hopes of the coming of the Messiah, and to ardent readers of the books of Daniel and Enoch, he was the Son of man; to Jews holding the ordinary faith and to readers of Isaiah and Micah, he was the Son of David; to his disciples, he was the Son of God, or simply the Son. Others, without thereby incurring the reproach of the disciples, took him for John the Baptist risen from the dead, for Elias, or for Jeremiah, in conformity with the popular belief that the ancient prophets were about to reappear, in order to make ready for the time of the Messiah.<sup>587</sup>

Absolute conviction, or rather an enthusiasm which shielded him from even the possibility of doubt, covered all these audacities. With our cold and hesitant natures, we little understand how any one can be thus possessed by the idea of which he has made himself the apostle. To us, members of deeply serious races, conviction means sincerity to one's self. But sincerity to one's self has not much

<sup>582</sup> Matt. 12: 14-16; 14: 13; Mark 3: 6, 7, 9; 29, 30; John 7: 1-10.

<sup>583</sup> Matt. 2: 20.

<sup>584</sup> Matt. 17: 20; Mark 9: 25.

<sup>585</sup> Luke 8: 45, 46; John 11: 33, 38.

<sup>586</sup> Acts 2: 22.

<sup>587</sup> Matt. 14: 2; 16: 14; 17: 3-13. Mark 6: 14, 15; 8: 28. Luke 9: 8, 9, 19.

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meaning for oriental peoples, little accustomed as they are to the subtleties of the critical spirit. Good faith and imposture are words which, in our rigid consciences, are opposed as two irreconcilable terms. In the East there are numberless ingenious loopholes of escape and circuitous paths from one to the other. Even highly exalted men, like the authors of apocryphal books, Daniel, for instance, and Enoch, committed, to aid their cause, and without the shadow of a scruple, acts which we should call frauds. Literal truth is of very little value to the oriental; he sees everything through the medium of his ideas, his interests, and his passions.

History is impossible unless we frankly admit that there are many standards of sincerity. Faith knows no other law than the interests of what it holds to be the truth. The end pursued being for it absolutely sacred, it makes no scruple of employing faulty arguments to prove its thesis when good arguments are unsuccessful. If such and such a proof be not valid, how many others are! If such and such a miracle never occurred, how many others did occur! How many pious men, convinced of the truth of their religion, have sought to triumph over the stubbornness of their fellows by the use of means the weakness of which was apparent to themselves! How many stigmatisers, epileptics, and convent visionaries have been compelled, by the influence of their environment and by their own belief, to acts of deception, either for the purpose of keeping abreast of others or to support a cause in peril! All great things are done through the people; we can lead the people only by adapting ourselves to its ideas. The philosopher who, knowing this, isolates and fortifies himself in his integrity deserves high praise. But he who accepts humanity with its illusions, and seeks to act with it and upon it, cannot be reproached. Cæsar knew very well



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that he was not the son of Venus; France would not be what she is, had she not for a thousand years believed in the Holy Ampulla of Rheims. It is easy for us, feeble as we are, to call this falsehood, and, proud of our timid honesty, to heap abuse on the heroes who have accepted the battle of life under other conditions. When we have accomplished by our scruples what they accomplished by their falsehoods, we shall have a right to be severe on them. At least we must make a marked distinction between societies like our own, where all takes place in the full light of reflection, and simple and credulous communities, in which the beliefs that have governed the ages have been born. Nothing great has been founded that is not built upon a legend. In such cases the only culprit is mankind, which is willing to be deceived.

## CHAPTER XVI

### *Miracles*

Two means of proof—miracles and the accomplishment of prophecies—could alone establish a supernatural mission in the opinion of the contemporaries of Jesus. He himself, but more especially his disciples, employed these two methods of demonstration in perfect good faith. For a long time Jesus had been convinced that the prophets had only written with reference to himself. He recognised himself in their sacred oracles. He regarded himself as the mirror in which the whole prophetic spirit of Israel had read the future. The Christian school, perhaps even during the lifetime of its founder, sought to prove that Jesus corresponded perfectly with all that the prophets had foretold of the Messiah.<sup>588</sup> In many cases these similarities were superficial, and for us scarcely appreciable. Most frequently they were fortuitous or insignificant circumstances in the Master's life which recalled to the disciples certain passages in the Psalms and the Prophets, in which, by reason of their constant preoccupation, they saw images of what was passing before their eyes.<sup>589</sup> The exegesis of the period thus consisted almost entirely in juggling with words, and in quotations made in an artificial and arbitrary manner.<sup>590</sup> The synagogue had no fixed official list of passages relating to the future reign. Messianic references could be easily created, and consisted rather in artifices of style than in serious reasoning.

<sup>588</sup> For example, Matt. 1: 22; 2: 5, 6, 15, 18; 4: 15.

<sup>589</sup> Matt. 1: 23; 4: 6, 14; 26: 31, 54, 56; 27: 9, 35. Mark 14: 27; 15: 28. John 12: 14, 15; 18: 9; 19: 19, 24, 28, 36.

<sup>590</sup> We see the same thing on almost every page of the Talmud.

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As to miracles, they were considered at this epoch the indispensable mark of the divine, and the sign of the prophetic vocation. The legends of Elijah and Elisha abounded in them. It was commonly believed that the Messiah would perform many.<sup>591</sup> At Samaria, a few miles from where Jesus was staying, a magician called Simon acquired an almost divine reputation by his wonders.<sup>592</sup> Later, when attempts were made to establish the fame of Apollonius of Tyana, and to prove that his life had been the sojourn of a god upon earth, success was deemed possible only by the invention of a vast cycle of miracles.<sup>593</sup> The Alexandrian philosophers themselves, Plotinus and others, were reputed to have performed several.<sup>594</sup> Jesus was therefore compelled to choose between two alternatives—either to renounce his mission, or to become a thaumaturgist. It must be remembered that the whole ancient world, with the exception of the great scientific schools of Greece and their Roman disciples, accepted miracles; and that Jesus not only believed in them, but had not the least idea of an order of nature under the reign of law. On this point his knowledge was in no way superior to that of his contemporaries. Indeed, one of his most deeply-rooted opinions was that by faith and prayer man had entire power over nature.<sup>595</sup> The faculty of working miracles was regarded as a privilege frequently conferred upon men by God,<sup>596</sup> and as having nothing surprising in it.

Time has changed that which constituted the power of the great founder of Christianity into something offensive

<sup>591</sup> John 7: 34; 4 Esdras, 13: 50.

<sup>592</sup> Acts 8: 9-11.

<sup>593</sup> See his biography by Philostratus.

<sup>594</sup> See *Lives of the Sophists* by Eunapius; *Life of Plotinus* by Porphyry; of Proclus, by Marinus; of Isidore, ascribed to Damascius.

<sup>595</sup> Matt. 17: 19; 21: 21, 22. Mark 11: 23, 24.

<sup>596</sup> Matt. 9: 8.

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to our ideas; and if ever the worship of Jesus loses its hold on mankind, it will be precisely on account of those acts which originally made people believe in him. Criticism experiences no embarrassment before historical phenomena of this order. A thaumaturgist of our own day, unless he be of an extreme simplicity, like that shown by certain German stigmatists, is objectionable; for he performs miracles without believing in them; he is a mere charlatan. But if we take a Francis of Assisi, the question becomes altogether different; the cycle of miracles connected with the origin of the Franciscan order, far from giving offence, affords us real pleasure. The founders of Christianity lived in a state of poetic ignorance as complete as that of St. Clare and the *tres socii*. They thought it perfectly natural that their Master should have interviews with Moses and Elias, that he should command the elements, that he should heal the sick. It must also be remembered that every idea loses somewhat of its purity, as soon as it aspires to realisation. Success is never attained without delicacy of soul suffering some injury. Such is the weakness of the human mind that the best causes are usually won by bad reasoning. The demonstrations of the primitive Christian apologists rest on very poor arguments. Moses, Christopher Columbus, and Mahomet triumphed over obstacles only by constantly taking men's weakness into account, and by sometimes withholding the genuine reasons for the truth. It is probable that the hearers of Jesus were more impressed by his miracles than by his preaching, profoundly divine as it was. It must be added that popular rumour, both before and after the death of Jesus, no doubt enormously exaggerated the number of occurrences of this kind. The types of Gospel miracles in fact present little variety; they repeat each other and seemed fashioned from a very small number of models, suited to the taste of the country.

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Amongst the miraculous narratives tediously enumerated in the Gospels, it is impossible to distinguish the miracles attributed to Jesus, either during his lifetime or after his death, from those in which he consented to play an active part. Above all it is impossible to ascertain whether their offensive characteristics—the groaning, struggling, and features savouring of jugglery<sup>597</sup>—are really historical, or whether they are fruits of the belief of the compilers, strongly imbued with theurgy, and, in this respect, living in a world similar to that of the “spiritualists” of our own days.<sup>598</sup> It was a popular belief indeed that the divine virtue in man was epileptic and convulsive in character.<sup>599</sup> Almost all the miracles that Jesus believed he performed seemed to have been miracles of healing. Medicine was at that period in Judæa what it still remains in the East, that is to say, quite unscientific and absolutely given over to individual inspiration. Scientific medicine, founded by Greece five centuries before, was at the time of Jesus unknown to the Jews of Palestine. In such a state of knowledge the presence of a man greater than average men, treating the patient with gentleness, and giving him, by tangible signs, assurance of his recovery, is frequently a decisive remedy. Who would dare to assert that in many cases, certain injuries always excepted, the touch of a gentle and beautiful woman is not worth all the resources of pharmacy? Cure is effected by the mere pleasure of seeing her. She gives what she can, a smile, a hope, and it is not in vain.

Jesus had no more conception than his compatriots of a

<sup>597</sup> Luke 8: 45, 46; John 11: 33, 38.

<sup>598</sup> Acts 2: 2–13; 4: 31; 8: 15–19; 10: 44–47. For almost a century the apostles and their converts dream only of miracles: see Acts, the Pauline writings, Papias in Euseb. 3: 39, etc.; and compare Mark 3: 15, and 16: 17, 18, 20.

<sup>599</sup> Mark 5: 30; Luke 6: 3, and 8: 46; John 11: 33, 38.

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rational medical science; like almost every one else, he believed that healing was to be effected by religious practices, and such a belief was perfectly consistent. From the moment that disease was regarded as a punishment for sin,<sup>600</sup> or the act of a demon,<sup>601</sup> and by no means as the result of physical causes, the best physician was the holy man possessed of power in the supernatural world. Healing was considered a moral act; and Jesus, who felt the moral power within him, believed himself specially gifted to heal. Convinced that the touching of his robe, the laying on of his hands, or the application of his saliva<sup>602</sup> did good to the sick, he would have been harsh indeed had he refused to those that suffered a solace which it was in his power to bestow. Healing the sick was regarded as one of the signs of the kingdom of God, and was always associated with the emancipation of the poor.<sup>603</sup> Both were signs of the mighty revolution which was to culminate in the redress of all infirmities. The Essenes, who have so many bonds of relationship with Jesus, also had the reputation of being very potent spiritual physicians.<sup>604</sup>

One of the kinds of healing which Jesus most often practised was exorcism, or the expulsion of demons. A strange disposition to believe in demons pervaded all minds. It was a universal opinion, not only in Judæa, but throughout the whole world, that demons seized upon the bodies of certain people and made them act against their own will. A Persian *Div*, mentioned several times in the Avesta,<sup>605</sup> *Aeschma-daëva*, the "*Div* of concupiscence," adopted by the Jews under the name of *Asmodeus*,<sup>606</sup> came to be con-

<sup>600</sup> John 5: 14; 9: 1-3, 34.

<sup>601</sup> Matt. 9: 32, 33; 12: 22. Luke 13: 11, 16.

<sup>602</sup> Luke 8: 43-45; 4: 40. Mark 8: 23. John 9: 6.

<sup>603</sup> Matt. 11: 5; 15: 30, 31. Luke 9: 1, 2, 6.

<sup>604</sup> See *ante*, p. 102, *note*.

<sup>605</sup> *Vendidad*, 11: 26; *Yaçna*, 10: 18.

<sup>606</sup> Tobit 3: 8; 6: 14. Babylonian Talmud, *Gittin*, 68 a.



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sidered the cause of all hysterical maladies in women.<sup>607</sup> Epilepsy, mental and nervous diseases, in which the patient seems no longer to belong to himself,<sup>608</sup> and infirmities the cause of which is not outwardly apparent, like deafness and dumbness,<sup>609</sup> were explained in the same fashion. The admirable treatise, "On Sacred Disease," by Hippocrates, which had set forth the true principles of medicine on this subject, four centuries and a half before Jesus, had not banished so great an error from the world. It was believed that there were more or less efficacious means of driving away the demons; and the occupation of the exorcist was a regular profession like that of the physician.<sup>610</sup> There can be no doubt that Jesus had in his lifetime the reputation of possessing the greatest secrets of the art.<sup>611</sup> At that time there were many lunatics in Judæa, doubtless in consequence of the general mental excitement. These mad folk, who were allowed to wander about at large, as they are still in the same regions, dwelt in the abandoned sepulchral caves which were the usual resorts of vagrants. Jesus had great influence over these unhappy beings.<sup>612</sup> A thousand singular incidents were told concerning his cures, in which all the credulity of the time found full scope. But here again the difficulties need not be exaggerated. The disorders that were explained by "possessions" were often very slight. At the present day in Syria people who are only somewhat eccentric are looked upon as mad or pos-

<sup>607</sup> Comp. Mark 16: 9; Luke 8: 3. Gospel of the Infancy, 16, 33; Syrian code in Land's *Anecdota Syriaca*, 1: 152.

<sup>608</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 7, 6: 2. Lucian, *Philopseud.*, 16. Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius*, 3: 30; 4: 20. Aretæus, *De causis morb. chron.*, 1: 4.

<sup>609</sup> Matt. 9: 33; 12: 22. Mark 9: 16, 24. Luke 11: 14.

<sup>610</sup> Tobit 8: 2, 3. Matt. 12: 27. Mark, 9: 38. Acts 19: 13. Josephus, *Antiq.*, 8, 2: 5. Justin, *Tryph.*, 85. Lucian, *Epigr.*, 23.

<sup>611</sup> Matt. 17: 20. Mark 9: 24-29.

<sup>612</sup> Matt. 8: 28; 9: 34; 12: 43-45; 17: 14-21. Mark 5: 1-15. Luke 8: 27-36.

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sessed by a demon, these two ideas being expressed by the same word—*medjnoun*.<sup>613</sup> In such cases a gentle word often suffices to expel the demon. Such, no doubt, was the method used by Jesus. Who knows whether his fame as an exorcist were not spread almost without his own knowledge? Residents in the East are occasionally surprised to find themselves, after some time, enjoying a great reputation as doctors, sorcerers, or discoverers of treasures, without being able to account to themselves for the facts which have given rise to these fancies.<sup>614</sup>

Many circumstances moreover seem to indicate that Jesus only became a thaumaturgist late in life and against his own inclinations. Frequently he works his miracles with reluctance, only after he has been besought to do so, reproaching those who ask for them with grossness of mind.<sup>615</sup> One particular point, apparently inexplicable, is the care which he takes to work his miracles in secret, and his request, addressed to those whom he heals, to tell no one.<sup>616</sup> When the demons wish to hail him as Son of God, he forbids them to open their mouths; it is in spite of him-

<sup>613</sup> The phrase "thou hast a devil" (Matt. 11: 18; Luke 7: 33; John 7: 20, 8: 48, and 10: 20) should be rendered "thou art mad,"—in Arabic, *mejnoun enté*. In all classic antiquity the verb *δαμονάω* signifies "to be insane."

<sup>614</sup> A man who had to do with recent movements of sectaries in Persia informed me that, having established in his neighbourhood a sort of freemasonry, on a footing greatly enjoyed, he presently found himself ranked as a prophet, and was astonished at hearing daily of the prodigies he had performed. A multitude of people were ready to die for him. His popular fame (*légende*) ran before him, as it were, and would have dragged him along if the Persian government had not put him out of the reach of his disciples. This man told me that he had himself come very near being made a prophet; that he had learned in that way how such things happen, and that they take place just as I had described them in the Life of Jesus.

<sup>615</sup> Matt. 12: 39; 16: 4; 17: 16. Mark 8: 17-21; 9: 18. Luke 9: 41; 11: 29.

<sup>616</sup> Matt. 8: 4; 9: 30-31; 12: 16-20. Mark 5: 43; 7: 36; 8: 26.

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self that they recognise him.<sup>617</sup> These features are especially to be noted in Mark, who is pre-eminently the evangelist of miracles and exorcisms. It seems as though the disciple who furnished the fundamental teachings of this Gospel used to importune Jesus with his admiration for wonders, and, as though the Master, weary of a reputation which weighed upon him, had often said, "See thou say nothing to any man." On one occasion this decordance in views led to a singular outburst,<sup>618</sup> a fit of impatience, in which the annoyance these perpetual demands of weak minds caused Jesus, broke forth. At times one might imagine that the position of thaumaturgist was distasteful to him, and that he tried to give as little publicity as possible to the wonders which, in a manner, grew beneath his feet. When his enemies asked a miracle of him, especially a celestial miracle, a "sign from heaven," he persistently refused.<sup>619</sup> We may therefore be permitted to believe that his reputation as a thaumaturgist was imposed upon him, that he did not resist it much, but that, at the same time, he did nothing to encourage it, and that, at all events, he felt the vanity of popular opinion in the matter.

It would show lack of a good historical method to attach over-much importance to our personal prejudices on this point. The essential condition of true criticism is to understand the great diversity of view between different ages, and to free one's self from the instinctive habits due to a purely rational education. To avoid the objections which might be raised against the character of Jesus, we ought not to suppress facts which, in the eyes of his con-

<sup>617</sup> Mark 1: 24, 25, 34, and 3: 12; Luke 4: 41. Compare the Life of Isidore, ascribed to Damascius, 56.

<sup>618</sup> Matt. 17: 16; Mark 9: 18; Luke 9: 41.

<sup>619</sup> Matt. 12: 38, 39; 16: 1-4. Mark 8: 11. Luke 11: 29-32.

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temporaries, were of the highest importance.<sup>620</sup> It would be easy to say that these are the additions of disciples far inferior to their Master, who, being unable to appreciate his true grandeur, have sought to magnify him by feats of illusion unworthy of him. But the four narrators of the life of Jesus are unanimous in extolling his miracles; one of them, Mark, the spokesman of the apostle Peter,<sup>621</sup> insists so strongly on this point, that, were we to trace the character of Christ from his Gospel exclusively, we should represent him as an exorcist in possession of charms of rare efficacy, as a very powerful and awe-inspiring sorcerer such as people prefer to avoid.<sup>622</sup> We will admit then, without hesitation, that acts which would now be considered characteristic of illusion or madness occupied a large place in the life of Jesus. Is the sublime aspect of such a life to be sacrificed to these uninviting features? By no means. A mere sorcerer would not have brought about a moral revolution like that effected by Jesus. If the thaumaturgist had in Jesus effaced the moralist and the religious reformer, he would have been the founder, not of Christianity, but of a school of theurgy.

The problem, moreover, similarly presents itself in the case of all saints and religious founders. Things now considered morbid, such as epilepsy and hallucinations, were formerly marks of power and greatness. Physicians have a name for the disease which made the fortune of Mahomet.<sup>623</sup> Almost in our own days the men who have done most for their kind (the excellent Vincent de Paul him-

<sup>620</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 3: 3.

<sup>621</sup> Papias in Euseb., 3: 39.

<sup>622</sup> Mark 6: 40; 5: 15, 17, 33; 6: 49, 50; 10: 32: cf. Matt. 8: 27, 34; 9: 8; 14: 27; 17: 6, 7; also Luke 4: 36; 5: 17; 8: 25, 35, 37; 9: 34. The apocryphal gospel of Thomas the "Israelite" carries this feature to the most shocking absurdity. Compare the "Miracles of the Infancy" in Thilo, *Cod. apocryph. N. T.*, p. 110, note.

<sup>623</sup> The *hysteria muscularis* of Schönlein (Sprenger: *Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohammad*, 1: 207 et seq.).

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self!) were, whether they desired it or not, thaumaturgists. If we proceed from the principle that every historical person to whom have been attributed acts which we in the nineteenth century hold to be irrational or suggestive of quackery, was either a madman or a charlatan, all criticism is nullified. The school of Alexandria was a noble school, yet nevertheless it gave itself up to the practice of an extravagant theurgy. Socrates and Pascal were not exempt from hallucinations. Facts must be explained by proportionate causes. Weak points in the human mind only engender weakness; great things always have great causes in man's nature, although they are often developed amidst a number of petty features which, to superficial minds, eclipse their grandeur.

In a general sense therefore it may be truly said that Jesus was only a thaumaturgist and exorcist in spite of himself. As always happens in great and divine careers, he accepted miracles exacted by public opinion rather than performed them. (Miracles are usually the work of the public, and not of him to whom they are attributed.) Jesus persistently refused to work miracles which the multitude would have created for him; the greatest miracle would have been his refusal to perform any; never would the laws of history and popular psychology have suffered a greater derogation. He was no more free than St. Bernard or St. Francis of Assisi to moderate the thirst of the multitude and his disciples for the marvellous. The miracles of Jesus were a violence done him by his age, a concession forced from him by passing necessity. Exorcist and thaumaturgus have alike fallen from their high place; but the religious reformer will live eternally.

Even those who did not believe in him were impressed by these acts and sought to witness them.<sup>624</sup> The pagans

<sup>624</sup> Matt. 14: 1, 2. Mark 6: 14. Luke 9: 7; 23: 8.

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and people unacquainted with him had a feeling of dread, and would fain have driven him out of their district.<sup>625</sup> Many thought perhaps of bringing his name into ill repute by connecting it with seditious movements.<sup>626</sup> But the purely moral tendency of the character of Jesus and his aloofness from politics saved him from such entanglements. His kingdom was in the circle of child-like men, whom the same freshness of imagination, the same foretaste of heaven, had grouped and kept steadfast around him.

<sup>625</sup> Matt. 8: 34; Mark 5: 17; Luke 8: 37.

<sup>626</sup> John 6: 14, 15; comp. Luke 22: 36-38.



## CHAPTER XVII

### *Final Conceptions of the Kingdom of God*

We suppose that this last phase of the activity of Jesus lasted for about eighteen months, from the time of his return from the Passover of the year 31 until his journey to the feast of Tabernacles in the year 32.<sup>627</sup> During this period the conceptions of Jesus were not enriched by the addition of any new element; but all that was already within him grew and developed with an ever-increasing degree of power and audacity.

The fundamental idea of Jesus from his earliest days was the establishment of the kingdom of God. But this kingdom of God, as we have already said, appears to have been understood by Jesus in very diverse senses. At times he might be taken for a democratic leader, desiring nothing more than the triumph of the poor and the outcast. At other times, the kingdom of God is the literal consummation of apocalyptic visions relating to the Messiah. Lastly, the kingdom of God is often the spiritual kingdom, and the deliverance at hand is a deliverance of the soul. The revolution desired by Jesus in this last sense is the one which has really taken place, the foundation of a new

<sup>627</sup> John 5: 1; 7: 2. In the scheme of the fourth Gospel the public life of Jesus seems to be reckoned as lasting two or three years. The Synoptics give no clear statement as to this, though their view seems to bring all the incidents within the compass of one year. (Compare the similar opinion of the Valentinians in Irenæus, *Adv. haer.* 1, 1: 3; 2, 22: 1, 2; also that of the Clementine Homilies, 17: 19.) If, as would appear, the life of Jesus ended A.D. 33, we get from Luke 3: 1 a duration of five years. In any case, since Pilate was deposed in A.D. 36, the public career of Jesus cannot have exceeded seven years. The uncertainty on this point comes, no doubt, from the fact that the beginning of his public life was an event not so precisely defined as is generally supposed.

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worship, purer than that of Moses. All these thoughts appear to have existed simultaneously in the mind of Jesus. The first however—that of a temporal revolution—does not appear to have impressed him greatly. He never considered the earth, or the riches of the earth, or material power, as being worth any thought; he had no worldly ambition. At times, as a natural consequence, his great religious importance was in danger of being transformed into a social importance. Men came asking him to act as judge and arbitrator in questions affecting their material interests. Jesus haughtily rejected such proposals, treating them almost as insults.<sup>628</sup> Thinking only of his heavenly ideal, he never abandoned his disdainful poverty. As to the other two conceptions of the kingdom of God, Jesus always appears to have held them simultaneously. Had he been only an enthusiast, led astray by the apocalypses on which popular imagination was nourished, he would have remained an obscure sectary, inferior to those whose ideas he followed. Had he only been a puritan, a sort of Channing or “Savoyard vicar,” he would undoubtedly have had no success. The two parts of his system, or rather his two conceptions of the kingdom of God, lean on each other; and this mutual support has been the cause of his incomparable success. The earliest Christians were dreamers, moving in a circle of ideas which we should call visionary; but, at the same time, they were the heroes of that social war which culminated in the enfranchisement of the conscience and in the establishment of a religion from which the pure worship proclaimed by the founder will finally proceed.

The apocalyptic ideas of Jesus in their completest form may be thus summed up. The actual state of mankind is nearing its end. This end will be an immense revolution,

<sup>628</sup> Luke 12: 13, 14.

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“an anguish” like the pains of child-birth, a *paragenesis*, or, in the words of Jesus himself, a “new birth,”<sup>629</sup> preceded by dark calamities and heralded by strange phenomena.<sup>630</sup> On the great day the sign of the Son of man will shine forth in the heavens; it will be a startling and luminous vision like that of Sinai, a mighty storm rending the clouds, a fiery meteor flashing in the twinkling of an eye from east to west. The Messiah will appear in the clouds,<sup>631</sup> clad in glory and majesty, to the sound of trumpets, and surrounded by angels. His disciples will be seated on thrones beside him. Then the dead will rise and the Messiah proceed to judgment.<sup>632</sup>

At this judgment men will be divided into two classes according to their works,<sup>633</sup> and the angels will execute the sentences.<sup>634</sup> The elect will enter into a delightful place of sojourn which has been prepared for them from the beginning of the world;<sup>635</sup> there they will be seated, clothed

<sup>629</sup> Matt. 19: 28.

<sup>630</sup> Matt. 24: 3-14; Mark 13: 4-8; Luke 17: 22-30, and 21: 7-11, 25-28. It should be noted that the picture of “the end of the age,” here ascribed by the Synoptics to Jesus, contains many features which belong to the siege of Jerusalem (A.D. 70). Luke wrote some time after this siege (21: 9, 20, 24); while the composition of Matthew, on the contrary (24: 15, 16, 22, 29), brings us to the very moment of the siege, or just after. No doubt, however, Jesus foretold great terrors as sure to precede his reappearance. These terrors were an essential feature in every Jewish apocalypse,—Enoch 99, 100, 102, 103 (Dillman’s Division); Carm. Sibyll. 3: 334, 633; 4: 168, and 5: 511, with the verses following; Assumption of Moses, chaps. 5, 6 (ed. Hilgenfeld); Apocalypse of Baruch in Ceriani, *Monum.* 1, 2: 79 *et seq.* In Daniel, also, the reign of the saints will not come till the desolation shall have reached its height (7: 25-27; 8: 23-26; 9: 26, 27; 12: 1-3).

<sup>631</sup> Dan. 7: 13; Carm. Sibyll. 3: 286, 652; Rev. 1: 7.

<sup>632</sup> Matt. 16: 27; 19: 28; 20: 21; 23: 39; 24: 30, 31; 25: 31-33; 26: 64. Mark 14: 62. Luke 13: 35; 22: 30, 69. 1 Cor. 15: 52; 1 Thess. 4: 15-17. Here the Christian idea departs widely from the Jewish: see 4 Esdras 5: 56-6: 6; 12: 33, 34.

<sup>633</sup> Matt. 13: 38-43; 25: 33.

<sup>634</sup> Matt. 13: 39, 41, 49.

<sup>635</sup> Matt. 25: 34; comp. John 14: 2.

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with light, at a feast presided over by Abraham,<sup>636</sup> the patriarchs, and the prophets. They will be the smaller number.<sup>637</sup> The rest will depart into *Gehenna*. *Gehenna* was the valley to the west of Jerusalem. There, at various times, the worship of fire had been practised, and the place had become a sort of sewer. *Gehenna*, therefore, in the ideas of Jesus, was a gloomy, filthy valley, a subterranean gulf full of fire.<sup>638</sup> Those excluded from the kingdom shall there be burnt and devoured by the undying worm, in the company of Satan and his rebel angels.<sup>639</sup> There shall there be weeping and gnashing of teeth.<sup>640</sup> The kingdom of heaven will be as a closed room, lighted from within, in the midst of a world of darkness and torments.<sup>641</sup>

This new order of things will be eternal. Paradise and *Gehenna* will be without end. An impassable abyss divides one from the other.<sup>642</sup> The Son of man, seated at the right hand of God, will rule over this final condition of the world and mankind.<sup>643</sup>

That all this was taken literally by the disciples, and at certain moments by the Master himself, appears absolutely clear from the writings of the time. If the first Christian generation possessed one profound and constant belief, it was that the end of the world was near,<sup>644</sup> and that the great

<sup>636</sup> Matt. 8: 11; 13: 43; 26: 29. Luke 13: 28; 16: 22; 22: 30.

<sup>637</sup> Luke 13: 23-30.

<sup>638</sup> Comp. Babylonian Talmud, *Schabbath*, 39 a.

<sup>639</sup> Matt. 25: 41. The idea of fallen angels, so developed in the Book of Enoch, was universally believed in by those directly about Jesus: see Jude 6, 7; 2 Peter 2: 4, 11; Rev. 12: 9; Luke 10: 18; John 8: 44.

<sup>640</sup> Matt. 5: 22; 8: 12; 10: 28; 13: 40, 42, 50; 18: 8; 24: 51; 25: 30. Mark 9: 43-49.

<sup>641</sup> Matt. 8: 12; 22: 13; 25: 30. Comp. Josephus, *Wars*, 3, 8: 5.

<sup>642</sup> Luke 16: 28.

<sup>643</sup> Mark 3: 29; Luke 22: 69; Acts 7: 55.

<sup>644</sup> Luke 18: 8; Acts 2: 17, and 3: 19, 20; 1 Cor. 15: 23, 24, 52; 1 Thess. 3: 13, 4: 14-17, and 5: 23; 2 Thess. 2: 1-11 (here *ἐνίστηκιν*, in the second verse, indicates a crisis close at hand; while Paul denies that the

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“revelation”<sup>645</sup> of Christ was about to take place. The startling proclamation, “The time is at hand,” which opens and closes the Apocalypse,<sup>646</sup> the incessantly reiterated appeal, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!”<sup>647</sup> were rallying cries of hope for the whole apostolic age. A Syrian expression, *Maran atha*, “Our Lord cometh!”<sup>648</sup> became a sort of password, which believers employed amongst themselves to strengthen their faith and hopes. The Apocalypse, written in the year 68 of our era,<sup>649</sup> declares that the end will come in three years and a half,<sup>650</sup> and the “Ascension of Isaiah” adopts a closely similar calculation.<sup>651</sup>

Jesus never indulged in such precision of detail. When he was questioned as to the time of his advent, he always refused to reply; indeed, he declared that the date of the great day was known only by the Father, who had revealed it neither to the angels nor to the Son.<sup>652</sup> He said that the time when the kingdom of God was most anxiously expected was just that at which it would not appear.<sup>653</sup> He constantly repeated that his coming would be a surprise, as in the days of Noah and of Lot; that we must be on our guard, always ready to set out; that each one must watch and keep

end is so near, but in verses 7, 8, asserts that it is very near); 1 Tim. 6: 14; 2 Tim. 4: 1-8; Titus 2: 13; James 5: 3, 8; Jude 16-21; 2 Pet. chap. 3; Rev. throughout,—in particular 1: 1; 2: 5, 16; 3: 11; 6: 11; 11: 14; 22: 6, 7, 12, 20. Compare 2 Esdras 4: 26.

<sup>645</sup> Luke 17: 30; 1 Cor. 1: 7, 8; 2 Thess. 1: 7; 1 Pet. 1: 7, 13; Rev. 1: 8.

<sup>646</sup> Rev. 1: 3; 22: 10 (comp. 1: 1).

<sup>647</sup> Matt. 11: 15; 13: 9, 43. Mark 4: 9, 23; 7: 16. Luke 8: 8; 14: 35. Rev. 2: 7, 11, 27, 29; 3: 6, 13, 22; 13: 9.

<sup>648</sup> 1 Cor. 16: 22.

<sup>649</sup> Rev., chap. 17. The sixth emperor here given (5: 10) as the one who “now is,” is Galba; the “beast about to come,” whose “number” is given in cipher (13: 18), is Nero.

<sup>650</sup> Rev. 4: 2, 3; 12: 6, 14. Comp. Dan. 7: 25; 12: 7.

<sup>651</sup> Chap. 4: 12, 14 (comp. Cedrenus, p. 68: Paris, 1647).

<sup>652</sup> Matt. 24: 36; Mark 13: 32.

<sup>653</sup> Luke 17: 20; comp. Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 97 a.

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his lamp trimmed as for a wedding procession, which arrives unexpectedly;<sup>654</sup> that the Son of man would come like a thief, at an hour when men would not expect him;<sup>655</sup> that he would appear as a great flash of light, running from one end of the heavens to the other.<sup>656</sup> But his declarations on the proximity of the catastrophe leave no room for any equivocation.<sup>657</sup> "This generation," he says, "shall not pass away, till all things be accomplished. . . . There be some of them that stand here, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God."<sup>658</sup> He reproaches those who do not believe in him, for not being able to read the signs of the kingdom to come. "When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the heaven is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day; for the sky is red and lowering. Ye know how to discern the face of the heaven; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times."<sup>659</sup> By an illusion common to all great reformers, Jesus imagined the end to be much nearer than it actually was; he did not take into account the sluggishness of human movements; he thought to realise in a single day that which, eighteen centuries later, has still to be achieved.

These formal declarations absorbed the minds of the Christian family for nearly seventy years. It was believed that some of the disciples would behold the day of final revelation without dying. John especially was reputed to be of this number;<sup>660</sup> many believed that he would never die. Perhaps this was a later opinion caused, towards the

<sup>654</sup> Matt. 24: 36-41; Mark 13: 32-35; Luke 12: 35-40; 17: 20, 21.

<sup>655</sup> Luke 12: 40; 2 Pet. 3: 10.

<sup>656</sup> Luke 17: 24.

<sup>657</sup> Matt. 10: 23; 24, 25 throughout, in particular 24: 29, 34. Mark 13: 30. Luke 13: 35; 21: 28-33.

<sup>658</sup> Matt. 16: 28; 23: 36, 39; 24: 34. Mark 8: 39. Luke 9: 27; 21: 32.

<sup>659</sup> Matt. 16: 2-4; Luke 12: 54-56.

<sup>660</sup> John 21: 22, 23.



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close of the first century, by the advanced age which John seems to have reached—this age having given rise to the belief that God wished to prolong his life indefinitely until the great day, so as to realise the words of Jesus. When he in his turn died, the faith of many was shaken, and his disciples attached to the prediction of Christ a less pronounced meaning.<sup>661</sup>

While Jesus fully admitted the apocalyptic beliefs, as they are to be found in the apocryphal Jewish books, he admitted the doctrine, which is the complement, or rather the condition of them all—namely, the resurrection of the dead. This doctrine, as we have already remarked,<sup>662</sup> was still somewhat new in Israel; many people either did not know it or did not believe it.<sup>663</sup> It was an article of faith to the Pharisees and the fervent adherents of Messianic beliefs.<sup>664</sup> Jesus accepted it unreservedly, but always in its most idealistic sense. Many imagined that in the resuscitated world they would eat, drink, and marry. Jesus indeed admits a new Passover, a table, and a new wine into his kingdom; but he expressly excludes marriage from it.<sup>665</sup> On this subject the Sadducees had an argument, coarse in appearance, but one which really conformed with the old theology. It will be remembered that, according to the ancient sages, a man survived only in his children. The Mosaic code had consecrated this patriarchal theory by a curious institution—the levirate law.<sup>666</sup> From this the Sad-

<sup>661</sup> Mark 9: 9; Luke 20: 27-38.

<sup>662</sup> Dan. 12: 2, 3. 2 Macc. 7; 12: 45, 46; 14: 46. Acts 32: 6, 8. Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 1: 3; *Wars*, 2, 8: 14, and 3, 8: 5.

<sup>663</sup> Matt. 26: 29; Luke 22: 30.

<sup>664</sup> Deut. 25: 5-10.

<sup>665</sup> Matt. 22: 24-28; Luke 20: 34-38; Ebionite Gospel ("of the Egyptians") in Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 2: 9, 13; Clem. Rom. *Epist.* 2: 12; Babylonian Talmud, *Berakoth*, 17 a.

<sup>666</sup> Luke 14: 14; 20: 35, 36. So Paul: 1 Cor. 15: 23-28; 1 Thess. 4: 12-17 (see *ante*, p. 117): comp. 4 Esdras, 9: 22.

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ducees drew subtle deductions against the resurrection. Jesus escaped them by the formal declaration that in the life eternal, differences of sex would no longer exist, and that men would be like the angels.<sup>667</sup> Sometimes he seems to promise resurrection only to the righteous, the punishment of the wicked consisting in complete death and annihilation.<sup>668</sup> Oftener, however, Jesus declares that the resurrection will bring eternal confusion to the wicked.

It will be seen that in all these theories there was nothing absolutely new. The Gospels and the apostolic writings scarcely contain anything as regards apocalyptic doctrines save what might be found already in "Daniel," "Enoch," the "Sibylline Oracles," and the "Assumption of Moses," which are books of Jewish origin.<sup>669</sup> Jesus accepted these ideas, which were generally diffused among his contemporaries. He made them his basis of action, or rather one of his bases; for he had too profound an idea of his true work to establish it solely upon such fragile principles—principles so liable to receive the crushing refutation of actual facts.

It is indeed evident that such a doctrine, taken by itself in a literal fashion, could have no future. The world falsified it by continuing to exist. One generation at the most was the limit of its endurance. The faith of the first Christian generation is intelligible, but the faith of the second generation is no longer so. After the death of John, or of the last survivor, whoever he might be, of the group which had seen the Master, the words of Jesus were

<sup>667</sup> Chap. 21 of the Fourth Gospel is an addition, as shown by the closing formula of the previous portion in chap. 20: 31. But the addition followed closely the publication of this Gospel.

<sup>668</sup> See *ante*, p. 117.

<sup>669</sup> Dan. 2-6-8, 10-13; Enoch 1, 93: 9, 56; also 45, 57, 62 (perhaps interpolated); Carm. Sibyll. 3: 573, 652, 766, 795 *et seq.*; Assumption of Moses, Hilgenfeld, *N. T. extra can. rec.* p. 99 *et seq.*

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convicted of falsity.<sup>670</sup> Had the doctrine of Jesus been simply belief in an approaching end of the world, it would certainly be now sleeping in oblivion. What then has saved it? The great breadth of Gospel conceptions, which has permitted ideas suited to very diverse intellectual conditions to be found under the same symbol. The world has not ended, as Jesus announced, and as his disciples believed it would end. But it has been renewed, and in one sense renewed as Jesus desired. It is because his thought was two-sided that it has been fruitful. His dreams have not suffered the fate of so many others which have crossed the human mind, because they concealed a germ of life which, having been introduced, thanks to a coating of fable, into the bosom of humanity, has thus borne eternal fruits.

And let it not be said that this is a benevolent interpretation, imagined in order to clear the honour of our great Master from the cruel contradiction inflicted on his dreams by reality. No, indeed; this true kingdom of God, this kingdom of the spirit, which makes of each man both king and priest; this kingdom which, like the grain of mustard-seed, has become a tree which shades the world, and amidst the branches of which the birds have their nests, was understood, desired, and founded by Jesus. By the side of the false, cold, impossible idea of an ostentatious advent, he conceived the real city of God, the true "palin-genesis," the Sermon on the Mount, the raising up of the weak, the love of the people, esteem for the poor, and the restoration of all that is humble, and true, and simple. This restoration he has depicted as an incomparable artist, in touches which will last for eternity. Each one of us owes that which is best in himself to him. Let us forgive

<sup>670</sup> The distress thus given to the Christian conscience is ingenuously reflected in 2 Pet. 3: 8-10 (probably of the date here referred to).

him his hopes of a vain apocalypse, and of a great triumphal coming upon the clouds of heaven. Perhaps these were the errors of others rather than his own; and if it be true that he himself shared the general illusion, what matter, since his dream made him strong in the face of death, and sustained him in a strife for which otherwise he might have been unequal?

We must then attach several meanings to the divine city conceived by Jesus. Had his only thought been that the end of time was at hand, and that we must make ready for it, he would not have surpassed John the Baptist. To renounce a world on the point of crumbling away, to detach one's self little by little from the present life, and to aspire to the kingdom about to come, would have been the one point in his preaching. The teaching of Jesus had always a much wider bearing. He proposed to create a new state of humanity, and not merely to prepare the end of that actually existent. Had Elias or Jeremiah come to earth again to prepare men for the supreme crisis, they would not have preached as he did. This is so true, that the morality, attributed to his latter days, has been found to be the eternal morality, that which has saved mankind. Jesus himself in many cases employs fashions of speech which do not accord in the least with the apocalyptic theory. He often declares that the kingdom of God has already begun; that every man bears it within himself, and, if he be worthy, can partake of it; that each one silently creates this kingdom by true conversion of heart.<sup>671</sup> The kingdom of God is then only righteousness, a better order of things than that which exists, the reign of justice which the faithful, according to their powers, ought to help in founding; or, again, freedom of soul, something analogous to the Buddhist "deliverance," the fruit of the soul's separation

<sup>671</sup> Matt. 6: 10, 33. Mark 12: 34. Luke 11: 2; 12: 31; 17: 21-24.

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from matter.<sup>672</sup> These truths, which to us are purely abstract, were living realities to Jesus. Everything in his mind was concrete and substantial. Jesus was the man of all men who most thoroughly believed in the reality of the ideal.

Even though accepting the Utopias of his time and his race, Jesus was thus able to make lofty truths of them, thanks to fruitful misconceptions of their import. His kingdom of God was doubtless the apocalypse, which was soon to be unfolded in the heavens. But besides this, and probably above all, it was the soul's kingdom, founded on freedom, and on the feeling of sonship which the good man knows in his rest on the bosom of his Father. It was a pure religion without forms, without temple, and without priest; it was the moral judgment of the world delegated to the conscience of the righteous man and to the arm of the people. This is what was destined to live; this is what has lived. When, at the close of a century of vain expectation, the materialistic hope of an approaching end of the world was worn out, the true kingdom of God came to light. Convenient explanations threw a veil over the material kingdom, which made no haste to appear. Men of obinate mind, who, like Papias, adhered to the literal truth of the words of Jesus, were considered narrow-minded and behind the age.<sup>673</sup> The Apocalypse of John, the first canonical book of the New Testament,<sup>674</sup> being too formally attached to the idea of an immediate catastrophe, became of secondary importance, was regarded as unintelligible, tortured in a thousand ways, and almost rejected;<sup>675</sup>

<sup>672</sup> See especially Mark 12: 34.

<sup>673</sup> Iren. *Adv. hæres.*, 5, 33: 3, 4; Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3: 39.

<sup>674</sup> Justin, *Tryph.*, 81.

<sup>675</sup> In the Greek church it was long denied a place in the canon: Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3: 25, 28, 39, and 7: 25; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.*, 4: 33, 36, and 15: 16; Greg. Nazianzen, *Carm.* p. 261, 1104 (ed. of Caillan); Council

at least its accomplishment was adjourned to an indefinite future. Some poor benighted beings, who, in a fully enlightened age, still clung to the hopes of the first disciples, became heretics (Ebionites, Millenarians), lost in the shallows of Christianity. Mankind had passed on to another kingdom of God. The element of truth contained in the thought of Jesus had prevailed over the chimera which obscured it.

Let us not, however, despise this chimera, which has been the coarse rind of the sacred fruit on which we live. This fantastic kingdom of heaven, this endless pursuit after a city of God, which has been the constant and absorbing idea of Christianity during its long career, has been the principle of that great instinct of futurity which has filled the souls of all reformers, persistent believers in the Apocalypse, from Joachim of Flora, down to the Protestant sectary of our own days. This impotent effort to found a perfect state of society has been the source of the extraordinary tension which has always made the true Christian an athlete at strife with his own epoch. The idea of the "kingdom of God," and the Apocalypse, which forms its complete image, are thus, in a sense, the loftiest and most poetic expression of human progress. But of necessity they also gave rise to great errors. The end of the world, hanging as a constant menace over mankind, hampered all secular development by the periodical panics which it caused during centuries.<sup>676</sup> Society, being no

of Laodicea, *Canon* 60; Nicephorus, *Chronogr.*, p. 419 (Paris, 1652, list at the end). The Armenian Church also makes the book of doubtful canonicity: Sarkis Schnorhali, quoted in *Exercice de la fo hr'et.*, with the approval of the Catholicos Nerses: Moscow, 1850 (in Armenian). Finally, the Apocalypse is wanting in the old *Peshito* version [the Syriac "vulgate," of the third and fourth century].

<sup>676</sup> See, for example, the prologue of Gregory of Tours to his "Ecclesiastical History of the Franks."



longer certain of its own existence, contracted therefrom a kind of trepidation and those habits of servile humility which rendered the Middle Ages so inferior both to ancient and modern times.

A profound change also took place in the manner of regarding the coming of Christ. When it was first announced to mankind that the end of its planet was at hand, like the infant which welcomes death with a smile, it had the intensest increase of joy that it has ever felt. But in growing old the world became attached to life. The day of grace, so long awaited by the simple souls of Galilee, became to the iron mediæval ages a day of wrath: *Dies iræ, dies illa!* But, in the very midst of barbarism, the idea of the kingdom of God continued to be fruitful. Some of the legal documents of the first half of the Middle Ages beginning with the formula, "On the coming of the evening of the world . . .," are charters of enfranchisement. In spite of the feudal Church, of sects, and of religious orders, holy men and women continued to protest in the name of the Gospel against the world's iniquity. Even in our own days, troublous days in which Jesus has no truer followers than those who seem to deny him, the dreams of an ideal organisation of society, which have so much analogy to the aspirations of the primitive Christian sects, are in one sense nothing but the blossoming of the same idea, one of the branches of that mighty tree in which germinates all thought of futurity, of which the "kingdom of God" will be eternally the root and the stem. On this phrase all the social revolutions of humanity will be grafted. But, tainted by a gross materialism, and aspiring to the impossible—that is to say, to the foundation of universal happiness upon political and economic measures, the socialistic endeavours of our time will remain unfruitful, until they take as their guiding principle the true spirit of Jesus, by which I mean absolute

idealism—the principle that to possess the world we must renounce it.

The phrase, “kingdom of God,” also expresses with singular felicity the want felt by the soul of a supplementary destiny, of a compensation for actual life. Those who cannot bring themselves to conceive of man as being a compound of two substances, and regard the deistic dogma of the immortality of the soul as being in contradiction with physiology, love to rest in the hope of a final reparation, which, under some unknown form, shall satisfy the needs of the heart of man. Who knows if the last term of progress after millions of ages may not evoke the absolute conscience of the universe, and in that conscience the awakening of all that has ever lived? The slumber of a million of years is no longer than the slumber of an hour. St. Paul, on this hypothesis, may have been right in saying, “In the twinkling of an eye!” (1 Cor. 15:52.) It is certain that the moral and virtuous part of humanity will have its reward, that one day the ideas of the poor and honest man will judge the world, and that on that day the ideal figure of Jesus will bring confusion to the frivolous man who has not believed in virtue, and to the selfish man who has been unable to attain to it. The favourite phrase of Jesus remains therefore full of an undying beauty. A kind of exalted divination seems to have maintained it in a vague sublimity simultaneously embracing diverse orders of truth.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *The Institutions of Jesus*

That Jesus was never wholly absorbed in his apocalyptic ideas is proved moreover by the fact that, at the very time they were most in his thoughts, he laid with rare forethought the foundations of a church that was destined to endure. It is scarcely possible to doubt that he himself chose from among his disciples those who received the special title of the "apostles," or the "twelve," since, on the day after his death, they are to be found forming a distinct body, and filling up by election the vacancies that happen in their midst.<sup>677</sup> They were the two sons of Jonas, the two sons of Zebedee, James son of Alpheus, Philip, Nathanael Bar-Tolmai, Thomas, Matthew, Simon Zelotes, Thaddeus or Lebbæus, and Judas of Kerioth.<sup>678</sup> It is probable that the idea of the twelve tribes of Israel influenced the choice of this number.<sup>679</sup> The "twelve," at all events, formed a group of privileged disciples, among whom Peter maintained a position of fraternal priority;<sup>680</sup> and to them Jesus entrusted the propagation of his work. There was nothing, however, resembling a regularly organised sacerdotal body. The lists of the "twelve," which have been preserved, contain many uncertainties and contradictions; two or three of those who appear in them

<sup>677</sup> Matt. 4: 1-4; Mark 3: 13-19; Luke 6: 13; John 6: 70; 13: 18; 15: 16; Acts 1: 13-26; 1 Cor. 15: 5; Gal. 1: 10; Rev. 21: 12.

<sup>678</sup> Besides the above, see Papias in Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3: 39.

<sup>679</sup> Matt. 19: 28; Luke 22: 30.

<sup>680</sup> Acts 1: 15; 2: 14; 5: 2, 3, 29; 8: 19; 15: 7. Gal. 1: 18.

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have remained completely obscure. At least two, Peter and Philip, were married and had children.<sup>681</sup>

To the twelve—Jesus evidently told secrets which he forbade them to communicate to the world.<sup>682</sup> It seems as though his plan at times was to surround himself with a certain degree of mystery, to postpone the most important testimony concerning himself until after his death, and to reveal himself completely only to his disciples, confiding to them the care of showing him forth afterwards to the world.<sup>683</sup> “What I tell you in the darkness, speak ye in the light; and what ye hear in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops” (Matt. 10: 27). This spared him the necessity of too precise statements and created a kind of medium between him and public opinion. It is clear that certain teachings were reserved for the apostles alone, and that he explained many parables to them, the meaning of which to the multitude was ambiguous.<sup>684</sup> An enigmatical form and a certain strange fashion of associating ideas were usual in the teachings of the doctors, as may be seen in the sentences of the *Pirké Aboth*. To his intimate friends Jesus explained whatever was peculiar in his apothegms or in his apologies, and for them separated his meaning from the wealth of illustration which sometimes made it obscure.<sup>685</sup> Many of these explanations appear to have been carefully preserved.<sup>686</sup>

During the lifetime of Jesus the apostles preached,<sup>687</sup>

<sup>681</sup> Concerning Peter, see *ante* p. 187; concerning Philip, see the testimonies of Papias, Polycrates, and Clement of Alexandria in Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 3: 30, 31, 39; 5: 24.

<sup>682</sup> Matt. 16: 20; 17: 9. Mark 8: 30; 9: 8.

<sup>683</sup> Matt. 10: 26, 27; 16: 20. Mark 4: 21, 22; 8: 30. Luke 8: 17; 9: 21; 12: 2, 3. John 14: 22. Epistle of Barnabas, 5.

<sup>684</sup> Matt. 13: 10–13, 34, 35; Mark 4: 10–12, 33, 34; Luke 8: 9, 10, and 12: 41.

<sup>685</sup> Matt. 16: 6–12; Mark 7: 17–23.

<sup>686</sup> Matt. 13: 34–44; Mark 7: 18–23.

<sup>687</sup> Luke 9: 6.

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but without ever going far from him.<sup>688</sup> Their preaching, moreover, was confined to the announcement of the speedy coming of the kingdom of God. They went from town to town, receiving hospitality, or rather taking it themselves, according to the custom of the land. In the East the guest has much authority; he is superior to the master of the house, who places the fullest confidence in him. Fire-side preaching like this is admirably adapted for spreading new doctrines. The hidden treasure is communicated, and thus payment is given for what has been received; politeness and good feeling lend their aid; the household is touched and converted. Without the factor of Eastern hospitality, an explanation of the propagation of Christianity would be impossible. Jesus, who greatly adhered to good old customs, encouraged his disciples to make no scruple of profiting by this ancient public right, probably abolished already in the great towns where there were inns.<sup>689</sup> "The labourer," said he, "is worthy of his food" (Matt. 10: 10). Once installed in any man's house, they were to remain there, eating and drinking what was offered to them, so long as their mission lasted.<sup>690</sup>

Jesus desired that, following his example, the messengers of the glad tidings should make their preaching pleasant by kindly and courteous manners. He directed that, on entering a house, they should give the salaam or greeting. Some hesitated, the salaam being then, as now in the East, a sign of religious communion, which is not hazarded with people of dubious faith.<sup>691</sup> "Fear nothing," said Jesus; "if no one in the house is worthy of your salute, it will return unto you."<sup>692</sup> Sometimes indeed the apostles of the

<sup>688</sup> Luke 10: 11.

<sup>689</sup> The Greek word *πανδοκειον* has been adopted in all tongues of the East as signifying an inn.

<sup>690</sup> Mark 6: 10.

<sup>691</sup> 2 John 10, 11.

<sup>692</sup> Matt. 10: 11-13; Luke 10: 5-7.

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kingdom of God were ill received, and came to complain to Jesus, who generally sought to soothe them. Some of them, convinced of the omnipotence of their Master, were hurt at this forbearance. The sons of Zebedee wished him to call down fire from heaven upon towns that were inhospitable.<sup>693</sup> Jesus received their outbursts with his subtle irony, and made them cease by saying: "The Son of man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9: 56).

He sought in every way to lay down as a principle that his apostles were as himself.<sup>694</sup> It was believed that he had endowed them with his own marvellous virtues. They cast out demons, prophesied, and formed a school of renowned exorcists,<sup>695</sup> although certain cases were beyond their powers.<sup>696</sup> They also wrought cures, either by the laying on of hands, or by anointing with oil,<sup>697</sup> one of the fundamental practices of oriental medicine. Lastly, like the *Psylli*,<sup>698</sup> they could handle serpents and drink deadly potions with impunity.<sup>699</sup> The farther we get from Jesus, the more offensive this theurgy becomes. But there is no doubt that it was generally used in the primitive church, and that it greatly attracted the attention of the world around.<sup>700</sup> Charlatans, as might be expected, took advantage of this movement of popular credulity. Even in the lifetime of Jesus, several, although not his disciples, cast out devils in his name. The real disciples were much an-

<sup>693</sup> Luke 9: 52-56.

<sup>694</sup> Matt. 10: 40-42; 25: 35-40. Mark 9: 40. Luke 10: 16. John 13: 20.

<sup>695</sup> Matt. 7: 22; 10: 1. Mark 3: 15; 6: 13. Luke 10: 17.

<sup>696</sup> Matt. 17: 18, 19.

<sup>697</sup> Mark 6: 13; 16: 18. James 5: 14.

<sup>698</sup> Herodotus, 14: 173.

<sup>699</sup> Mark 16: 18; Luke 10: 19.

<sup>700</sup> Mark 16: 20.



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noyed at this, and sought to prevent them. Jesus, who regarded it as homage paid to his renown, was not very severe towards them. It must be observed, moreover, that the exercise of these supernatural powers had, if one can say so, become a trade. Carrying the logic of absurdity to extremes, certain men cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils.<sup>701</sup> They imagined that this sovereign lord of the infernal regions must have full authority over his subordinates, and that, in acting through him, they were certain to put the intruding spirit to flight.<sup>702</sup> Some even sought to purchase from the disciples of Jesus the secret of the miraculous powers which had been conferred upon them.<sup>703</sup>

From this time the germ of a church began to show itself. This fertile idea of the power of men bound together in union (*ecclesia*) seems to have been derived from Jesus. Full of his purely idealistic doctrine that it is union by love that brings souls together, he declared that whenever a few men should gather together in his name, he would be in the midst of them. To the church he confided the right to bind and to unbind (that is to say, to make certain things lawful or unlawful), to remit sins, to reprove, to give warning with authority, and to pray with the certainty of being favourably heard.<sup>704</sup> It is possible that many of these words may have been attributed to the Master, so as to give a basis for the collective authority, the substitution of which for that of Jesus was afterwards sought. At all events, it was only after his death that particular churches were set up, and even this first constitution was made purely and simply on the model of the synagogue. Many people who had loved Jesus much, and

<sup>701</sup> An ancient Philistine divinity, regarded by the Jews as a demon.

<sup>702</sup> Matt. 12: 24-29.

<sup>703</sup> Acts 8: 18-24.

<sup>704</sup> Matt. 18: 18-20; John 20: 23.

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had founded great hopes upon him, such as Joseph of Arimathea, Mary Magdalene, and Nicodemus, apparently did not join these churches, but clung to the tender or respectful memory of him which they had cherished.

In the teaching of Jesus, moreover, there is no trace of an applied ethics or of a canonical law, however slightly defined. Once only, on the question of marriage, he spoke decidedly and forbade divorce.<sup>705</sup> Neither was there any theology or creed. There were views respecting the Father, the Son, and the Spirit,<sup>706</sup> from which the Trinity and the Incarnation were afterwards deduced, but they were then only in a state of indeterminate imagery. The later books of the Jewish canon already recognised the Holy Spirit, a sort of divine hypostasis, sometimes identified with Wisdom or the Word.<sup>707</sup> Jesus insisted on this point,<sup>708</sup> and professed to give his disciples a baptism by fire and the spirit,<sup>709</sup> far preferable to that of John. To Jesus this Holy Spirit was identical with the breath for ever emanating from God the Father.<sup>710</sup> Then subtleties began to appear in the doctrine. It was held that Jesus had promised his disciples to send, as a substitute after his death, a Spirit who should teach them all things and bear witness to the truths which he himself had promulgated.<sup>711</sup> One day the apostles believed that they had received the baptism of this Spirit under the form of a mighty wind and tongues of fire.<sup>712</sup> To designate the Spirit, use was made of the word

<sup>705</sup> Matt. 19: 3-11.

<sup>706</sup> Matt. 28: 19 (comp. 3: 16, 17); John 15: 26.

<sup>707</sup> Wisdom 1: 7; 7: 7; 9: 17; 12: 1. Eccles. 1: 9; 15: 5; 24: 27; 39: 8. Judith 16: 17.

<sup>708</sup> Matt. 10: 20; Luke 12: 12, and 24: 49; John 14: 26, and 15: 26.

<sup>709</sup> Matt. 3: 11; Mark 1: 8; Luke 3: 16; John 1: 26, and 3: 5; Acts 1: 5, 8, and 10: 47.

<sup>710</sup> Matt. 10: 20; Mark 13: 11; Luke 12: 12, and 21: 15.

<sup>711</sup> John 15: 26; 16: 13, 16. Comp. Luke 24: 49; Acts 1: 8.

<sup>712</sup> Acts 2: 1-4; 11: 15; 19: 6. Comp. John 7: 39.

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Peraklit borrowed by Syro-Chaldaic from the Greek παράκλητος, which appears to have had in this case the sense of "advocate," or "counsellor,"<sup>713</sup> or else that of "interpreter of heavenly truths," and "teacher charged with the revelation to men of mysteries still veiled."<sup>714</sup> It is very doubtful whether Jesus employed the word. This was an application of the process which Jewish and Christian theologies were to follow during centuries, and which was to produce a whole series of divine assessors, the *Metathronos*, the *Synadelphie* or *Sandalphon*, and all the personifications of the Cabbala. But in Judaism these creations were to remain free personal speculations, whilst in Christianity, from the fourth century onwards, they were to form the very essence of orthodoxy and universal doctrine.

It is unnecessary to point out how remote from the ideas of Jesus was the idea of a religious book, containing a code and articles of faith. Not only did he not write, but it was contrary to the spirit of the infant sect to produce sacred books. Its members believed themselves on the eve of the great final catastrophe. The Messiah came to put his seal upon the Law and the Prophets, not to promulgate new Scriptures. And so, with the exception of the Apocalypse, which in one sense was the only revealed book of primitive Christianity,<sup>715</sup> all the other writings of the apostolic age were works occasioned by existing circumstances, making no pretensions to furnish a complete dogmatic whole. The Gospels had at first an entirely personal character, and possessed much less authority than tradition.<sup>716</sup>

<sup>713</sup> John 14: 16; 1 John 2: 1. To the Advocate (παράκλητος) was opposed the Accuser (κατήγορος).

<sup>714</sup> John 14: 26; 15: 26; 16: 7-11. The word is peculiar to the fourth Gospel and to Philo (*De mundi opificio*, 6).

<sup>715</sup> Justin, *Tryph.*, 81.

<sup>716</sup> Papias, in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3: 39.

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Had the sect, however, no sacrament, no rite, no rallying sign? It had one which all traditions ascribe to Jesus. One of the favourite ideas of the Master was that he was the new Bread of Life, bread far better than manna, on which mankind was to live. In speaking of this idea, the germ of the Eucharist, he at times gave it a singularly concrete form. On one occasion especially, in the synagogue of Capernaum, he allowed himself very free expression which cost him several of his disciples. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, It was not Moses that gave you the bread out of heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread out of heaven."<sup>717</sup> And he added, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."<sup>718</sup>

These words excited great murmuring. "The Jews therefore murmured concerning him because he said, I am the bread which came down out of heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how doth he now say, I am come down out of heaven?" But Jesus, insisting with still more force, said, "I am the bread of life; your fathers did eat the manna in the wilderness and they died. This is the bread which cometh down out of heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down out of heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; yea, and the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world" (John 6: 48-51).<sup>719</sup> The offence was now at its height: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus, going yet further, said, "Verily,

<sup>717</sup> John 6: 32-35.

<sup>718</sup> A similar turn of expression, leading to a like misunderstanding, is found in John 4: 10-14.

<sup>719</sup> All this is too strongly stamped with the peculiar style of the fourth Gospel to allow us to think it the genuine language of Jesus. Still, the incident is not to be regarded as wholly without historic reality.

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verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have not life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father: so he that eateth me, also he shall live because of me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven: not as the fathers did eat, and died: he that eateth this bread shall live for ever." Several of his disciples were offended at such obstinacy in paradox, and ceased to follow him. Jesus did not retract; he only added: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I have spoken unto you, are spirit, and are life." The twelve remained faithful, in spite of his strange preaching. To Cephas in particular it gave an opportunity of showing his absolute devotion, and of proclaiming once more, "Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

It is probable that from that time some custom derived from the discourse, so ill received by the people of Capernaum, was established in the common repasts of the sect. But on this subject apostolic traditions diverge very greatly, and are probably incomplete by design. The synoptic Gospels, the narratives of which are confirmed by St. Paul, suppose a unique sacramental act to have served as the origin of the mysterious rite, and identify it with "the Last Supper."<sup>720</sup> The fourth Gospel, which records for us the incident at the synagogue of Capernaum, does not speak of such an act, although it describes the Last Supper at considerable length. Elsewhere we see Jesus recognised

<sup>720</sup> Matt. 26: 26-29; Mark 14: 22-25; Luke 22: 14-20; 1 Cor. 11: 23-26.

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in the breaking of bread,<sup>721</sup> as though to those who sought his company this were one of his most characteristic acts. When he was dead, the form under which he appeared to the pious memory of his disciples was that of the ruler of a mysterious banquet, taking the bread, blessing it, breaking it, and presenting it to those present.<sup>722</sup> It is probable that this was one of his habits, and that at such moments he was particularly loving and tender. One material circumstance, the presence of fish on the table (a striking indication which proves that the rite originated on the shore of Lake Tiberias),<sup>723</sup> was itself almost sacramental, and became a necessary part of current conceptions of the sacred feast.<sup>724</sup>

These repasts were amongst the sweetest moments of the infant community. On such occasions they all gathered together; the Master spoke to each one, and kept up a conversation full of charm and gaiety. Jesus loved these meetings, and was pleased to see his spiritual family thus grouped around him.<sup>725</sup> By Jewish custom the master of the house, at the beginning of the meal, took the bread, blessed it with a brief invocation, broke it and then offered it to each of those at the board. The wine was blessed in like

<sup>721</sup> Luke 24: 30, 35.

<sup>722</sup> Luke *loc. cit.*; John 21: 13; Gospel of Hebrews in Jerome, *De viris illustribus*, 2.

<sup>723</sup> Comp. Matt. 7: 10; 14: 17-21; 15: 34-38. Also Mark 6: 38-44; Luke 9: 13-17; 11: 11, and 24: 42; John 6: 9-13 and 21: 9-13. The basin of Lake Tiberias is the only part of Palestine where fish makes a considerable portion of the diet.

<sup>724</sup> John 21: 13; Luke 24: 42, 43. Compare the oldest representations of the Eucharist as reported or corrected by Rossi in his dissertation on the ΙΧΘΥΣ ("fish:" Dom Pitra's *Spicilegium Solesmense*, 3: 568 *et seq.*; comp. Rossi, *Bull. di arch. crist.*, 3d year, pp. 44, 73 *et seq.*). It is true that small fish were, like bread, an indispensable part of every meal (see the inscription of Ianuvium, 2d col. 16, 17). The acrostic contained in the word ΙΧΘΥΣ [*Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Τίδς Σωτήρ*] was no doubt allied with an older tradition on the importance of the fish in the primitive meal of the disciples.

<sup>725</sup> Luke 22: 15.



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manner.<sup>726</sup> Among the Essenes and the Therapeutae the sacred feast had already taken the ritual importance afterwards given to the Christian eucharist.<sup>727</sup> Eating of the same bread was considered as a kind of communion, a reciprocal bond.<sup>728</sup> On this point the Master used extremely strong terms, which were afterwards taken in an unduly literal sense. Jesus was at once extremely idealistic in his conceptions, and extremely materialistic in his expression of them. Desiring to express the thought that the believer only lives by him, that he was wholly, body, blood, and soul, the life of the truly faithful, he said to his disciples, "I am your food,"—a phrase which, turned into figurative style, became, "My flesh is your bread, my blood your drink." And then the modes of speech employed by Jesus, which were always strongly subjective, carried him still further. At table, pointing to the food, he said, "I am here"—holding the bread—"this is my body;" and of the wine, "This is my blood,"—all manners of speech equivalent to "I am your food."

This mysterious rite acquired great importance in the lifetime of Jesus. It was probably established some little time before the last journey to Jerusalem, and it resulted from a general doctrine much more than from a determinate act. After the death of Jesus, it became the great symbol of Christian communion,<sup>729</sup> and it was with the most solemn moment of the Saviour's life that its origin was connected. Christians wished to see, in the consecration of bread and wine, a memory of farewell which Jesus, at the moment of passing from life, had left to his disciples.<sup>730</sup> They found

<sup>726</sup> Matt. 14: 19; Luke 24: 30; Acts 27: 35; Babylonian Talmud, *Berakoth*, 37 b. This is still the Jewish custom.

<sup>727</sup> Philo, *De vita contempl.*, 6-11; Josephus, *Wars*, 2, 8: 7.

<sup>728</sup> Acts 2: 46; 20: 7, 11. 1 Cor. 10: 16-18.

<sup>729</sup> Acts 2: 42, 46.

<sup>730</sup> Luke 22: 19; 1 Cor. 11: 20-26; Justin, *Tryph.*, 41, 70; *Apol.*, 1: 66.

Jesus himself in this sacrament.<sup>731</sup> The wholly spiritual conception of the presence of souls, which was one of the Master's most familiar ideas, and made him say, for example, that he was, in his own person, with his disciples when they gathered together in his name,<sup>732</sup> made this easily admissible. Jesus, as we have already said,<sup>733</sup> had never any definite notions of what constitutes individuality. At the height of exaltation to which he had attained, the ideal surpassed all else so far, that the body counted for nothing. We are one when we love one another, when we live one for another; thus it was that he and his disciples were one.<sup>734</sup> His disciples adopted the same phraseology.<sup>735</sup> Those who for years had lived with him had always seen him take the bread and the cup "in his holy and venerable hands,"<sup>736</sup> and thus offer himself to them. It was he whom they ate and drank; he became the true Passover, the ancient one having been revoked by his blood. It is impossible to translate into our essentially determinate language, in which a rigid distinction between the literal and the metaphorical must always be observed, habits of style the essence of which is the attribution of full reality to the metaphor, or rather to the idea the metaphor represents.

<sup>731</sup> Cor. 10: 16.

<sup>732</sup> Matt. 18: 20.

<sup>733</sup> See *ante*, p. 258.

<sup>734</sup> John, chap. 12 throughout.

<sup>735</sup> Ephes. 3: 17.

<sup>736</sup> Words of a very ancient canon of the Greek and Latin Mass.

## CHAPTER XIX

### *Growing Enthusiasm and Exaltation*

It is clear that a religious society of this nature, founded solely on expectation of the kingdom of God, must be in itself very incomplete. The first Christian generation lived almost entirely on anticipations and dreams. On the eve of beholding the world come to an end, they regarded as useless all that served only to prolong it. Fondness for property was looked on as a sin.<sup>737</sup> All that attaches man to earth, all that draws him away from heaven, was to be shunned. Although several of the disciples were married, it would seem that no marriages were contracted after entrance into the sect.<sup>738</sup> Celibacy was greatly preferred.<sup>739</sup> At one moment the Master apparently approved of those who mutilated themselves in prospect of the kingdom of God.<sup>740</sup> In this he was consistent with his principle, "If thy hand or thy foot causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire. And if thine eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire."<sup>741</sup> Cessation from generation was often regarded as the sign and condition of the kingdom of God.<sup>742</sup>

<sup>737</sup> Matt. 19: 21; Luke 14: 33; Acts 4: 32-35, and 5: 1-11.

<sup>738</sup> Matt. 19: 10-12; Luke 18: 29, 30.

<sup>739</sup> This is the constant teaching of Paul: comp. Rev. 14: 4.

<sup>740</sup> Matt. 19: 12.

<sup>741</sup> Matt. 18: 8, 9: comp. Babylonian Talmud, *Niddah*, 13 b.

<sup>742</sup> Matt. 22: 30; Mark 12: 25; Luke 20: 35; Ebionite Gospel of the Egyptians, in Clem. Alex. *Strom.*, 3: 9, 13; Clem. Rom. Ep. 2: 12.

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Never, it is clear, would this primitive church have formed a lasting society but for the great variety of seeds sown by Jesus in his teaching. More than a century was necessary for the true Christian church—that which has converted the world—to disentangle itself from this little sect of “latter-day saints,” and become a framework applicable to human society as a whole. The same thing occurred indeed in the case of Buddhism, which at first was founded only for monks. The same thing would have happened in the order of St. Francis had that order succeeded in its design of becoming the rule of the whole of human society. Essentially Utopian in their origin, owing their success to their exaggerations, the great systems we have just mentioned have only conquered the world by being profoundly modified and by abandoning their excesses. Jesus did not go beyond this first and entirely monachal period, with its belief that the impossible can be attempted with impunity. He made no concession to necessity. He boldly preached war upon nature and total severance from ties of blood. “Verily I say unto you,” he said, “there is no man that hath left house, or wife, or brethren, or parents, or children, for the kingdom of God’s sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this time, and in the world to come eternal life.”<sup>743</sup>

The instructions which Jesus is said to have given his disciples breathe the same exaltation.<sup>744</sup> He who was so tolerant to the outside world, he who was sometimes contented with half adhesions, exercised extreme rigour towards his own followers. He would have no “all buts.” His disciples might be described as an order governed by the austere rules. Faithful to his idea that the cares of

<sup>743</sup> Luke 18: 29, 30.

<sup>744</sup> Matt. 10 (throughout); 24: 9. Mark 6: 8–11; 9: 40; 13: 9–13. Luke 9: 3–5; 10: 1–7; 12: 4–12; 21: 17. John 15: 18–21; 17: 14.

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life trouble man and abase him, Jesus demanded of his associates complete severance from earth and perfect devotion to his work. They were to carry with them neither money nor provisions for the way, not even a scrip or change of raiment. They had to practise absolute poverty, to live on alms and hospitality. "Freely ye received, freely give," <sup>745</sup> he said in his beautiful language. If arrested and arraigned before judges, they were not to prepare their defence; the heavenly advocate would inspire them with what they were to say. The Father would send his Spirit from on high upon them, and this Spirit would become the principle of all their acts, the director of their thoughts, their guide through the whole world.<sup>746</sup> If driven from any town, they were to shake the dust from their shoes, at all times giving testimony of the proximity of the kingdom of God, that none might plead ignorance. "Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel," he added, "till the Son of man be come" (Matt. 10: 23).

A strange ardour breathes through all these discourses, which in part may be the creation of his disciples' enthusiasm;<sup>747</sup> but, even in that case, they came indirectly from Jesus himself, for it was he who had inspired the enthusiasm. To those who desired to follow him he predicted severe persecutions and the hatred of mankind. He sent them forth as lambs into the midst of wolves. They would be scourged in the synagogues and dragged to prison. Brother would deliver up brother, and father, son. When they were persecuted in one country, they were to flee into another. "A disciple," said he, "is not above his master, nor a servant above his lord. . . . Be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the

<sup>745</sup> Matt. 10: 8: comp. Midrash Ialkout, *Deuteron.*, § 824.

<sup>746</sup> Matt. 10: 20. John 14: 16, 17, 25-27; 16: 7, 13.

<sup>747</sup> The expressions in Matt. 10: 38, and 16: 24, in Mark 8: 34, and Luke 14: 27, must have been conceived after the death of Jesus.

soul. . . . Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father; but the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows.”<sup>748</sup> “Every one therefore,” he continued, “who shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven.”<sup>749</sup>

In his passionate severity he went so far as to abolish all natural feeling. His exactions had no longer any bounds. Despising the healthy limits of man's nature, he demanded that he should exist only for him, that he should love him alone. “If any man cometh unto me,” he said, “and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.”<sup>750</sup> “So therefore whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.”<sup>751</sup> At such moments there was something strange and more than human in his words; they were as a fire, consuming life at its very root, and reducing all to a frightful wilderness. The harsh and gloomy feeling of disgust for the world and of excessive self-abnegation which characterises Christian perfection, was founded, not by the subtle and cheerful moralist of earlier days, but by the sombre giant whom a kind of mighty presentiment was withdrawing more and more from the pale of humanity. It might be said that, in these moments of warfare with the heart's most legitimate cravings, Jesus had forgotten the pleasure of living, of loving, of

<sup>748</sup> Matt. 10: 24-31; Luke 12: 4-7.

<sup>749</sup> Matt. 10: 32, 33; Mark 8: 38; Luke 9: 26, and 12: 8, 9.

<sup>750</sup> Luke 14: 26. Allowance should be made for the vein of exaggeration in Luke.

<sup>751</sup> Luke 14: 33.



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seeing, and of feeling. Passing still further beyond all limits, he even said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" <sup>752</sup>

Two anecdotes of a kind that cannot be accepted as historical, but which, although exaggerations, were intended to represent a characteristic feature, aptly illustrate this defiance thrown down to nature. He said to one man, "Follow me!" "But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." To this Jesus answered, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead: but go thou and publish abroad the kingdom of God. And another also said, I will follow thee, Lord; but first suffer me to bid farewell to them that are at my house. But Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." <sup>753</sup> Extraordinary self-confidence, and, at times, accents of singular sweetness, reversing all our ideas of him, caused these exaggerations to be easily received. "Come unto me," he cried, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." <sup>754</sup>

A great danger necessarily threatened the future of this exalted morality, thus expressed in hyperbolical language

<sup>752</sup> Matt. 10: 37-39; 16: 24-26. Mark 8: 34-37. Luke 9: 23-25; 14: 26, 27; 17: 33. John 12: 25.

<sup>753</sup> Matt. 8: 21, 22. Luke 9: 56-62.

<sup>754</sup> Matt. 11: 28-30.

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and with terrible energy. By severing man from earth, the ties of life were riven asunder. The Christian was to be praised for being a bad son or a bad patriot, if it were for Christ that he resisted his father and fought against his country. The ancient city, the republic, mother of her citizens, the state, and the common law were thus considered hostile to the kingdom of God; a fatal germ of theocracy was implanted in the world.

From this point another consequence can be perceived. A morality such as this, created for a temporary crisis, must seem impossible when brought into a peaceful country, a community assured of its own duration. Thus the Gospel was destined to become for Christians a Utopia which few would care to realise. For the great majority these terrible maxims would rest in profound oblivion, an oblivion encouraged by the clergy itself; the Gospel man would be a dangerous man. The most selfish, proud, harsh, and materialistic of all human beings—a Louis XIV. for instance—would find priests to persuade him, in spite of the Gospel, that he was a Christian. But, on the other hand, there were always to be found holy men who took the sublime paradoxes of Jesus literally. Perfection being set beyond ordinary social conditions, and a complete Gospel life being only possible outside the world, the principle of asceticism and monasticism was established. Christian societies were destined to have two moral codes—the one moderately heroic for ordinary men, the other excessively exalted for the perfect man; and the perfect man would be a monk, subjected to rules which professed to realise the Gospel ideal. It is obvious that this ideal, were it only on account of its enforced celibacy and poverty, could not become a law for all. In one sense the monk would be thus the only true Christian. Ordinary common sense has a repulsion from such excesses, taking as its

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standpoint that desire for the impossible is a mark of weakness and error. But ordinary common sense is a bad judge where great matters are in question. To obtain a little from humanity, we must ask much. The immense moral progress due to the Gospel is the result of its exaggerations. It is thus that, like Stoicism but with infinitely greater fulness, it has been a living argument for man's divine powers, a monument raised to the potency of the will.

It may easily be imagined that to Jesus, at this period of his life, all that was not of the kingdom of God had absolutely faded away. He was, if one can say so, entirely outside nature; family, friendship, country, had no longer any meaning for him. There can be no doubt that from this moment he had sealed his fate. Sometimes one is tempted to believe that, seeing in his own death a means of founding his kingdom, he deliberately determined to allow himself to be slain.<sup>755</sup> At other times, although such a thought only latterly became a doctrine, death presented itself to his mind as a sacrifice, destined to appease his Father and save mankind.<sup>756</sup> A singular taste for persecution and tortures possessed him.<sup>757</sup> His blood appeared to him as the water of a second baptism with which he ought to be baptised, and he seemed full of a strange longing to hasten this baptism, which alone could quench his thirst.<sup>758</sup>

The grandeur of his views on the future was at times surprising. He did not deceive himself about the terrible storm he was to raise in the world. "Think not," he said with intrepidity and beauty, "that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace but a sword. . . . There shall be from henceforth five in one house divided, three

<sup>755</sup> Matt. 16: 21-23; 17: 12, 21, 22.

<sup>757</sup> Luke 6: 22, 23.

<sup>756</sup> Mark 10: 45.

<sup>758</sup> Luke 12: 50.

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against two, and two against three. . . . For I come to set a man against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." <sup>759</sup> "I came to cast fire upon the earth; and what will I, if it is already kindled." <sup>760</sup> "They shall put you out of the synagogues," he continued, "yea, the hour cometh that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service unto God." <sup>761</sup> "If the world hateth you, ye know that it hath hated me before it hated you. Remember the word that I said unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord. If they persecute me, they will also persecute you." <sup>762</sup>

Carried away by this fearful increase of enthusiasm, and governed by the necessity of a mission that day by day grew more exalted, Jesus was no longer a free agent; he belonged to his work, and, in one sense, to mankind. Sometimes one would have said that his reason seemed affected. He suffered mental anguish and agitation. <sup>763</sup> The great vision of the kingdom of God always shining before his eyes made him dizzy. It must be remembered that his disciples at times thought him mad, <sup>764</sup> and that his enemies declared him to be possessed. <sup>765</sup> His excessively passionate temperament carried him incessantly beyond the bounds of human nature. His work was not a work of reason, and, holding the human intellect in derision, what he most imperatively demanded was "faith." This was the word most frequently repeated in the little group of saints. <sup>766</sup> It is the watchword of all popular movements. No such movement, it is clear, would take place at all, were it neces-

<sup>759</sup> Matt. 10: 34-36; Luke 12: 51-58: comp. Micah 7: 5, 6.

<sup>760</sup> Luke 12: 49 (see the Greek).

<sup>761</sup> John 16: 2.

<sup>762</sup> John 15: 18-20.

<sup>763</sup> John 12: 27.

<sup>764</sup> Mark 3: 21, 22.

<sup>765</sup> Mark 3: 22. John 7: 20; 8: 48, 49; 10: 20, 21.

<sup>766</sup> Matt. 8: 10; 9: 2, 22, 28, 29; 17: 19. John 6: 29-33.

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sary that its author should win his disciples one after another by dint of logically deduced demonstrations. Reflection only leads to doubt. If the authors of the French Revolution, for example, had had to be previously convinced by prolonged meditations, they would have all grown old without achieving anything. Jesus, in like manner, aimed less at regular conviction than at the excitement of enthusiasm. Urgent and imperative, he suffered no opposition; men had to be converted, nothing less would satisfy him. His natural gentleness seemed to have abandoned him; at times he was harsh and capricious.<sup>767</sup> Occasionally his disciples did not understand him, and in his presence had a feeling akin to fear.<sup>768</sup> His displeasure at the slightest opposition led him to inexplicable and apparently absurd actions.<sup>769</sup>

It was not that his virtue deteriorated; but his struggle for the ideal against reality became insupportable. Contact with the world wounded and revolted him. Obstacles caused him irritation. His idea of the Son of God became blurred and exaggerated. Divinity is intermittent; one cannot be Son of God all through a lifetime without a break. One is so at certain times by sudden flashes of light which become lost in the midst of long intervals of darkness. The fatal law which condemns an idea to decay as soon as it seeks the conversion of men applied to him. The tone he had adopted could not be kept up for more than a few months; it was time that death came to cut the knot of a situation strained to the utmost point, to remove him from the impossibilities of an interminable path, and, by delivering him from an over-prolonged trial, to lead him forth sinless into heavenly peace.

<sup>767</sup> Matt. 17: 17; Mark 3: 5, and 9: 19; Luke 8: 45, and 9: 41.

<sup>768</sup> This is specially noticeable in Mark 4: 40, 41; 5: 15; 9: 31; 10: 32.

<sup>769</sup> Mark 11: 12-14, 20-23.

## CHAPTER XX

### *Opposition to Jesus*

During the first epoch of his career, it seems as though Jesus met with no serious opposition. His preaching, thanks to the extreme liberty enjoyed in Galilee, and to the number of teachers who arose on every hand, made little impression beyond a somewhat restricted circle. But when Jesus entered upon a path brilliant with wonders and public successes, the first mutterings of storm began to make themselves heard. More than once he had to conceal himself and fly.<sup>770</sup> Antipas, however, did not interfere with him, although Jesus sometimes made very severe comments on him.<sup>771</sup> At Tiberias, his usual residence,<sup>772</sup> the tetrarch was only one or two leagues distant from the district chosen by Jesus as the centre of his activity; he heard reports of his miracles, and, no doubt taking them to be clever tricks, he desired to see them.<sup>773</sup> Sceptics were at that time very curious about jugglery of this description.<sup>774</sup> With his ordinary tact, Jesus declined to gratify him. He took care not to mingle with an irreligious world which wished to derive idle amusement from him; he aspired only to gain the people; for the simple he reserved means fitted for them alone.

On one occasion, the report was spread that Jesus was none other than John the Baptist risen from the dead.

<sup>770</sup> Matt. 12: 14-16; Mark 3: 7, and 9: 29, 30.

<sup>771</sup> Mark 8: 15; Luke 12: 32.

<sup>772</sup> Josephus, *Life*, 9; Madden, "History of Jewish Coinage," p. 97 *et seq.*

<sup>773</sup> Luke 9: 9; 23: 8.

<sup>774</sup> Lucian, *Lucius* (authorship doubtful), 4.



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Antipas became anxious and ill at ease,<sup>775</sup> and used artifice to rid his dominions of the new prophet. Certain Pharisees, under the pretence of regard for Jesus, came to tell him that Antipas was seeking to have him slain. Jesus, despite his great simplicity, saw the snare and did not depart.<sup>776</sup> His peaceful habits and his abstinence from popular agitation ultimately reassured the tetrarch and dissipated the danger.

It must not be supposed that the new doctrine was received with equal favour in all the towns of Galilee. Not only did sceptical Nazareth continue to repulse him who was to become its glory; not only did his brothers persist in their lack of faith in him,<sup>777</sup> but the cities of the lake themselves, albeit generally well disposed, were not all converted. Jesus often complained of the incredulity and hardness of heart which he encountered, and although it may be natural to make allowance in such reproaches for the exaggeration of the preacher, although we are sensible of that kind of outcry against the age (*convicium seculi*) which Jesus affected in imitation of John the Baptist,<sup>778</sup> it is clear that the country was far from giving itself up entirely to the kingdom of God. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida!" cried he; "for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Howbeit I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto Heaven? thou shalt go down unto Hades; for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in thee, it would

<sup>775</sup> Matt. 14: 1, 2; Mark 6: 14-16; Luke 9: 7-9.

<sup>776</sup> Luke 13: 31-33.

<sup>777</sup> John 7: 5.

<sup>778</sup> Matt. 12: 39, 45; 13: 15; 16: 4. Luke 11: 29.

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have remained until this day. Howbeit I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.”<sup>779</sup> “The queen of Sheba,” he added, “shall rise up in judgment with the men of this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here.”<sup>780</sup> His wandering life, at first so full of charm, now began to weigh upon him. “The foxes,” said he, “have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.”<sup>781</sup> He accused unbelievers of not yielding to evidence. Bitterness and reproach became more and more frequent with him.

Jesus, in fact, was not capable of receiving opposition with the coolness of the philosopher, who, understanding the reasons for the various opinions which share the world, finds it perfectly natural that all should not agree with him. One of the principal faults of the Jewish race is its harshness in controversy, and the abusive tone which it almost always imports into it. There have never in the world been such bitter quarrels as those of the Jews amongst themselves. It is a feeling for fine shades of opinion that makes the polished and moderate man. But lack of this feeling is one of the most persistent features of the Semitic mind. Subtle and refined works, such as the *Dialogues of Plato*, are altogether foreign to these nations. Jesus, who was free from almost all the failings of his race, whose leading characteristic indeed was an infinite delicacy, was led, in

<sup>779</sup> Matt. 11: 21-24; Luke 10: 12-15.

<sup>780</sup> Matt. 12: 41, 42; Luke 11: 31, 32.

<sup>781</sup> Matt. 8: 20; Luke 9: 58.

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spite of himself, to employ the polemical style in general use.<sup>782</sup> Like John the Baptist,<sup>783</sup> he used very harsh terms against his opponents. Of an exquisite gentleness with the simple, he was irritated at incredulity, however little aggressive it might be.<sup>784</sup> He was no longer the mild teacher of the "Sermon on the Mount," who had as yet met with neither resistance nor difficulty. The passion which underlay his character led him to make use of the keenest invectives.<sup>785</sup> Jesus applied to himself, not without reason, the passage from Isaiah: <sup>786</sup> "He shall not strive, nor cry aloud; neither shall any one hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench."<sup>787</sup> And yet many of the recommendations addressed by him to his disciples contain germs of real fanaticism,<sup>788</sup> germs which the Middle Ages were destined to develop cruelly. Is he to be reproached for this? No revolution is effected without some harshness. Had Luther, or the actors in the French Revolution, been compelled to observe the rules of politeness, neither Reformation nor Revolution would have been accomplished. Let us congratulate ourselves in like manner that Jesus encountered no law to punish the invectives he uttered against one class of citizens. Otherwise the Pharisees would have been in-violate. All great human things have been achieved in the name of absolute principles. A critical philosopher would

<sup>782</sup> Matt. 12: 34; 15: 14; 23: 33.

<sup>783</sup> Matt. 3: 7.

<sup>784</sup> Matt. 12: 30; Luke 21: 23.

<sup>785</sup> This singular mixture ought not to surprise us. A man of our own times, M. de Lamennais, has forcibly presented the same contrast. In his noble book, "The Words of a Believer," the most immoderate anger and the sweetest relents alternate, as in a mirage. This man, who was extremely gentle in the intercourse of life, became unreasonably obstinate toward those who did not think as he did.

<sup>786</sup> Chap. 42: 2, 3.

<sup>787</sup> Matt. 12: 19, 20.

<sup>788</sup> Matt. 10: 14, 15, 21, 22, 34-39; Luke 19: 27.

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have said to his disciples: "Respect the opinion of others; and believe that no one is so completely right that his opponent is completely wrong." But the action of Jesus had nothing in common with the disinterested speculation of the philosopher. To feel that one has touched the ideal for a moment, and has been frustrated by the wickedness of a few, is a thought insupportable to a fervent soul. What must it have been to the founder of a new world?

The invincible obstacle to the ideas of Jesus came above all from the Pharisees. Jesus diverged more and more from the Judaism that was reputed orthodox. Now, the Pharisees were the true Jews; the very nerve and sinew of Judaism. Although this party had its headquarters at Jerusalem, it had adherents who were either settled in Galilee, or often resorted there.<sup>789</sup> As a rule they were men of narrow mind, greatly concerned with externals; and their piety was haughty, formal, and self-satisfied.<sup>790</sup> Their manners were ridiculous, and excited the amusement even of those who respected them. The epithets which were given to them by the people, savouring of caricature, prove this. There was the "bandy-legged Pharisee" (*Nikfi*), who walked in the streets shuffling his feet and knocking them against the stones; the "bloody-browed Pharisee" (*Kizai*), who went about with his eyes shut to avoid seeing women, and dashed his forehead so much against the walls that it was always blood-stained; the "pestle Pharisee" (*Medinkia*), who kept himself bent double like the handle of a pestle; the "strong-shouldered Pharisee" (*Shikmi*), who walked with his back bent as though on his shoulders he carried the whole burden of the Law; the "What-is-

<sup>789</sup> Mark 7: 1; Luke 5: 17, and 7: 36.

<sup>790</sup> Matt. 6: 2, 5, 16; 9: 11, 14; 12: 2; 23: 5, 15, 23. Luke 5: 30; 6: 2, 7; 11: 39-41; 18: 12. John 9: 16. *Pirké Aboth*, 1: 16. Josephus, *Antiq.*, 17, 2: 4; 18, 1: 3; also *Life*, 38. Babylonian Talmud, *Sota*, 22 b.

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there-to-do?-I-do-it Pharisee," ever on the watch for a precept to fulfil; and lastly, "the dyed Pharisee," whose devotional external aspect was but a varnish of hypocrisy.<sup>791</sup> This strictness, in fact, was often only apparent, and, in reality, concealed great moral laxity.<sup>792</sup> The people nevertheless were deceived by it. The people, whose instinct is always right, even when it is most astray as regards individuals, is very easily duped by false devotees. That which it loves in them is good and worthy of being loved; but it has not sufficient insight to distinguish between appearance and reality.

The antipathy which, in such a highly-strung state of society, must necessarily break forth between Jesus and men of this character, is easy to understand. Jesus recognised only the religion of the heart; while that of the Pharisees almost exclusively consisted in observances. Jesus sought the humble and outcast of all kinds, and in this the Pharisees saw an insult to their religion of respectability. The Pharisee was an infallible and impeccable man, a pedant always right in his own estimation, taking the principal place in the synagogue, praying in the street, giving alms to the sound of a trumpet, and ever on the watch for salutations. Jesus maintained that every man should await the judgment of God with fear and trembling. The evil religious tendency represented by Pharisaism did not reign without opposition. Many men before or during the time of Jesus, such as Jesus son of Sirach (one of the true ancestors of Jesus of Nazareth), Gamaliel, Antigonus of

<sup>791</sup> Mishna, *Sota*, 3: 2; Jerusalem Talmud, *Berakoth*, 9 (end); Babylonian Talmud, *Sota*, 22 b. The two readings of this curious passage show marked differences. We have usually followed the Babylonish, which seems the more natural (comp. Epiphanius 16: 1). The points in Epiphanius, and many in the Talmud, may be referred to a later time, when "Pharisee" had come to be a synonym of "devotee."

<sup>792</sup> Matt. 5: 20; 15: 4; 23: 3, 16-33. John 8: 7. Josephus, *Antiq.*, 12, 9: 1; 13, 10: 5.

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Soco, and, above all, the gentle and noble Hillel, had taught very lofty doctrines almost of a Gospel character. But these good seeds had been choked. The beautiful maxims of Hillel, summing up the whole Law as equity,<sup>793</sup> those of Jesus son of Sirach, making worship consist in doing good,<sup>794</sup> were forgotten or anathematised.<sup>795</sup> Shammai, with his narrow and exclusive spirit, had conquered. An enormous mass of "traditions" had stifled the Law,<sup>796</sup> under pretext of protecting and interpreting it. No doubt these conservative measures may have been useful in their way; it is well that the Jewish people should have loved its Law even to madness, since it was this frantic love which, by saving Mosaism under Antiochus Epiphanes and under Herod, preserved the leaven necessary for the birth of Christianity. But in themselves, these old precautions were only puerile. The synagogue, which was the depository of them, was nothing more than a parent of error. Its reign was at an end; and yet to require its abdication was to require that which an established power has never done or been able to do.

The conflicts of Jesus with official hypocrisy were incessant. The ordinary tactics of reformers, who come to the front in a state of religious matters such as we have just described, which may be termed "traditional formalism," are to oppose the "text" of the sacred books to "traditions." Religious zeal always innovates, even when it claims to be in the highest degree conservative. Just as the neo-Catholics of our own time are steadily growing more and more remote from the Gospel, so the Pharisees left the Bible at each step farther distant. This is why the

<sup>793</sup> Babylonian Talmud, *Schabbath*, 31 a; *Joma*, 35 b.

<sup>794</sup> Eccles. 17: 21-24; 35: 1-7.

<sup>795</sup> Jerusalem Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 11: 1; Babylonian Talmud, *ibid.* 100 b.

<sup>796</sup> Matt. 15: 2.



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Puritan reformer is, as a rule, essentially "biblical," taking the unchangeable text as a base from which to criticise current theology, which has changed from one generation to another. Thus acted later, the Karaites and the Protestants. Jesus applied the axe to the root of the tree much more forcibly. Sometimes, it is true, we see him invoke the text against the false *masores* or traditions of the Pharisees.<sup>797</sup> But in general he dwells lightly on exegesis—it is to conscience that he appeals. With one stroke he cuts through both text and commentaries. While he pointed out to the Pharisees that they seriously perverted Mosaism by their traditions, he himself made no pretence of a return to Moses. His goal was in the future, not in the past. Jesus was more than the reformer of an obsolete religion; he was the creator of the eternal religion of humanity.

Disputes broke out, especially regarding a number of external practices introduced by tradition, which neither Jesus nor his disciples observed.<sup>798</sup> The Pharisees reproached him strongly for this. When he dined with them, he greatly scandalised them by failing to observe the customary ablutions. "Give alms," said he, "those things which are within; and all things are clean unto you."<sup>799</sup> What hurt his sense of delicacy most was the air of assurance which the Pharisees exhibited in religious matters, and their paltry worship, which resulted in a vain search after precedence and titles, and by no means in bettering their hearts. An admirable parable embodied this thought with infinite charm and justice. "Two men," said he, "went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men,

<sup>797</sup> Matt. 15: 2-6. Mark 7: 2-8.

<sup>798</sup> Matt. 15: 2-14. Mark 7: 4, 8. Luke 5: 33-39; 6: 1-11; 11: 37-44.

<sup>799</sup> Luke 11: 41.

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extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I get.' But the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' I say, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other."<sup>800</sup>

A hatred, which death alone could satisfy, was the consequence of these controversies. John the Baptist had already provoked enmities of the same character.<sup>801</sup> But the aristocrats of Jerusalem, who despised him, had permitted simple folk to take him for a prophet.<sup>802</sup> In this case however the war was to the death. A new spirit had appeared in the world, making all that had come before it crumble to decay. John the Baptist was essentially a Jew; Jesus was scarcely one at all. Jesus always appealed to the delicacy of the moral sentiment. He was a disputant only when he argued against the Pharisees, his opponents forcing him, as nearly always happens, to adopt their tone.<sup>803</sup> His exquisite irony, his sharp provocations, always struck home. They were everlasting stigmas, which have remained festering in the wound. This Nessus-shirt of ridicule, which for eighteen centuries the Jew, son of the Pharisees, has dragged in tatters after him, was woven by Jesus with divine skill. Masterpieces of fine raillery, their features are written in lines of fire on the flesh of the hypocrite and the false devotee. Incomparable features, worthy of a son of God! Only a god knows how to kill after this fashion. Socrates and Molière can but touch the skin. Jesus carries fire and rage to the very marrow.

But it was also just that this great master of irony should

<sup>800</sup> Luke 18: 9-14: comp. 14: 7-11.

<sup>801</sup> Matt. 3: 7-10; 17: 12, 13.

<sup>802</sup> Matt. 14: 5; 21: 26. Mark 11: 32. Luke 20: 6.

<sup>803</sup> Matt. 12: 3-8; 13: 16-33.

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pay for his triumph with his life. Even in Galilee, the Pharisees sought to ruin him, and put in force against him the manœuvre which was later to prove successful at Jerusalem. They endeavoured to interest the partisans of the newly-founded political faction in their quarrel.<sup>804</sup> The facilities for escape found by Jesus in Galilee, and the weakness of the government of Antipas, baffled these attempts. He ran into danger of his own free will. He saw clearly that his action, if he remained confined to Galilee, was of necessity limited. Judæa drew him as by a charm; he wished to attempt one last effort to win the rebellious city; and seemed anxious to fulfil the proverb—that a prophet ought not to die outside Jerusalem (Luke 13: 33).

<sup>804</sup> Mark 3: 6.

## CHAPTER XXI

### *The Last Journey of Jesus to Jerusalem*

For a long time Jesus had been aware of the dangers surrounding him.<sup>805</sup> During a period of time which may be estimated at eighteen months, he avoided going on pilgrimage to the holy city.<sup>806</sup> At the feast of Tabernacles of the year 32 (according to the hypothesis we have adopted) his relatives, always malevolent and sceptical,<sup>807</sup> pressed him to go there. The evangelist John seems to insinuate that in this invitation there was some hidden project to ruin Jesus. "Go into Judæa; show yourself to the world; things like these are never done in secret. Go to Judæa where people can see what you do" (John 7: 3, 4). Jesus, suspecting some treachery, at first refused; but when the caravan of pilgrims had started, he set out on the journey, unknown to every one, and almost alone.<sup>808</sup> It was the last farewell that he bade to Galilee. The feast of Tabernacles fell at the autumnal equinox. Six months had still to elapse before the fatal consummation. But during this interval Jesus never again saw his beloved northern land. The days of pleasantness have passed away; step by step he must now traverse the path of sorrows that will only end in the anguish of death.

His disciples, and the pious women who followed him, met him again in Judæa.<sup>809</sup> But how greatly was all changed for him here! In Jerusalem Jesus was a stranger.

<sup>805</sup> Matt. 16: 20, 21; Mark 8: 30, 31.

<sup>806</sup> John 7: 1.

<sup>807</sup> John 7: 5.

<sup>808</sup> John 7: 10.

<sup>809</sup> Matt. 27: 55; Mark 15: 41; Luke 23: 49, 55.

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Here he felt a wall of resistance he could not penetrate. Hemmed in by snares and difficulties, he was unceasingly dogged by the enmity of the Pharisees.<sup>810</sup> Instead of that illimitable faculty of belief, the happy gift of youthful natures, which he found in Galilee—instead of those good and gentle folk, amongst whom objections (which are always in part the fruit of evil thinking and indocility) had no existence, here at every step he met with an obstinate scepticism, upon which the means of action that had succeeded in the north so well had little effect. His disciples were despised as being Galileans. Nicodemus, who, on one of the former visits of Jesus, had had a nocturnal interview, almost compromised himself with the Sanhedrim by his desire to defend him. “Art thou also of Galilee?” they said to him. “Search and see that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.”<sup>811</sup>

The city, as we have already remarked, displeased Jesus. Until now he had always avoided great centres, preferring rural districts and towns of small importance for his field of action. Many of the precepts which he gave to his apostles were absolutely inapplicable, except in a simple community of humble folk.<sup>812</sup> Since he had no conception of the world, and was accustomed only to the kindly communism of Galilee, remarks constantly escaped him, the simplicity of which might well appear odd at Jerusalem.<sup>813</sup> His imagination and his love of nature felt constraint within its walls. It is not the destiny of true religion to emerge from the tumult of towns, but from the tranquil quietude of the fields.

The arrogance of the priests made the courts of the

<sup>810</sup> John 7: 20, 25, 30, 32.

<sup>811</sup> John 7: 50-52.

<sup>812</sup> Matt. 10: 11-13; Mark 6: 10; Luke 10: 5-8.

<sup>813</sup> Matt. 16: 3; Mark 11: 3; 14: 13, 14; Luke 19: 31; 22: 10-12.

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Temple disagreeable to him. One day some of his disciples, who knew Jerusalem better than he, wished him to notice the beauty of the Temple buildings, the admirable choice of materials, and the richness of the votive offerings which covered the walls. "See ye not all these things," said he; "verily I say unto you there shall not be left here one stone upon another."<sup>814</sup> He refused to admire anything, unless it was a poor widow who passed at that moment and threw a small coin into the box. "This poor widow cast in more than they all," said he; "for all these did of their superfluity cast in unto their gifts: but she of her want did cast in all the living that she had."<sup>815</sup> This habit of criticising all that was going on at Jerusalem, of exalting the poor who gave little, of slighting the rich who gave much,<sup>816</sup> and of rebuking the wealthy priests who did nothing for the good of the people, naturally exasperated the sacerdotal caste. As the seat of a conservative aristocracy, the Temple, like the Mussulman *Haram* which has succeeded it, was the last place in the world in which revolutions could triumph. Imagine a reformer going in our own time to preach the overthrow of Islamism round the Mosque of Omar! The Temple, however, was the centre of Jewish life, the point at which victory or death was essential. On this Calvary, where Jesus assuredly suffered more than at Golgotha, his days were passed in disputation and bitterness, in the midst of tedious controversies about canonical law and exegesis, for which his great moral grandeur, far from giving him any advantage, positively unfitted him.

In his troubled life at this period, the sensitive and kindly heart of Jesus was able to find a refuge, where he

<sup>814</sup> Matt. 24: 1, 2; Mark 13: 1, 2; Luke 19: 44, and 21: 5, 6; comp. Mark 6: 11).

<sup>815</sup> Mark 12: 41-44; Luke 21: 1-4.

<sup>816</sup> Mark 12: 41.



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enjoyed much tranquillity. After having passed the day disputing in the Temple, Jesus used to descend at evening into the valley of Kedron, and rest awhile in the orchard of a kind of farm (probably a place where oil was made) called Gethsemane,<sup>817</sup> which served as a pleasure-garden to the inhabitants. Thence he would proceed to pass the night upon the Mount of Olives, which shuts in the horizon of the city on the east.<sup>818</sup> This district is the only one, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, presenting an aspect that is in any way pleasing and verdant. Groves of olives, figs, and palms were numerous there, and gave their names to the villages, farms, or enclosures of Bethphage, Gethsemane, and Bethany.<sup>819</sup> Upon the Mount of Olives were two great cedars, the memory of which was long cherished amongst the dispersed Jews; their branches served as a refuge for beevies of doves, and under their shade were established small bazaars.<sup>820</sup> The whole precinct was in a manner the abode of Jesus and his disciples; they evidently knew it field by field and house by house.

In particular the village of Bethany,<sup>821</sup> situated at the summit of the hill, upon the slope which commands the Dead Sea and the Jordan, at a journey of an hour and a half from Jerusalem, was the place especially loved by Jesus.<sup>822</sup> There he made the acquaintance of a family of three persons, two sisters and a third member, whose friend-

<sup>817</sup> Mark 11: 19; Luke 22: 39; John 18: 1, 2. This cannot be far from a spot where Catholic piety has enclosed a few old olive trees by a wall. The word "Gethsemane" apparently signifies "oil-press."

<sup>818</sup> Luke 21: 37, *ALG* 22: 39; John 8: 1, 2.

<sup>819</sup> This we may infer from the meaning of the names (Beth-phage, "place of figs," Bethany, "of dates," and Gethsemane), though they may be interpreted differently: see Babylonian Talmud, *Pesachim*, 53 a.

<sup>820</sup> Jerusalem Talmud, *Taanith*, 4: 8.

<sup>821</sup> Now *El-azirieh*, from *El-Azir*, Arabic for Lazarus: mediæval, *Lazarium*.

<sup>822</sup> Matt. 21: 17, 18; Mark 11: 11, 12.

ship had a great charm for him.<sup>823</sup> Of the two sisters, the one called Martha was an obliging, kind woman, assiduous in her attentions,<sup>824</sup> while the other, Mary, on the contrary, pleased Jesus by a placidity of temperament,<sup>825</sup> and by her highly developed speculative tendencies. Seated at the feet of Jesus, she often forgot, in listening to his words, the duties of everyday life. Her sister, upon whom all these duties devolved at such times, gently complained. "Martha, Martha," said Jesus to her, "thou art anxious and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful. For Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."<sup>826</sup> A certain Simon the Leper, who was the owner of the house, was apparently the brother of Mary and Martha,<sup>827</sup> or at least formed part of the family. It was there that, in the midst of pious friendship, Jesus forgot the vexations of public life. In this quiet home he consoled himself for the wrangling which the scribes and the Pharisees never ceased to raise around him. He often sat on the Mount of Olives, facing Mount Moriah,<sup>828</sup> having under his eyes the splendid perspective of the terraces of the Temple, and its roofs covered with glittering plates of

<sup>823</sup> John 11: 5, 35, 36.

<sup>824</sup> Luke 10: 38-42; John 12: 2. Luke seems to put the dwelling on the road from Galilee to Jerusalem; but the locality here indicated (chap. 9: 51 to 18: 31) is unintelligible if taken literally. Sundry incidents of this portion of the narrative seem to have occurred at or near Jerusalem.

<sup>825</sup> John 11: 20.

<sup>826</sup> Luke 10: 38-42.

<sup>827</sup> Matt. 26: 6; Mark 14: 3; Luke 7: 40, 43; John 11: 1-46 and 12: 1-3. The name of Lazarus, given to the brother of Mary and Martha in the fourth Gospel, seems to come from the parable in Luke 16: 19-31 (note especially verses 30, 31). The epithet "leper" given to Simon, corresponding with the phrase "full of sores" (Luke 16: 20), may have led to the curious grouping in the fourth Gospel; while the awkward explanation given in John 11: 1, 2, shows clearly that Lazarus is a less substantial person in the tradition than the two sisters.

<sup>828</sup> Mark 13: 3.

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metal. This view used to strike strangers with admiration; at sunrise especially the holy mountain dazzled the eyes, and seemed as it were a mass of snow and gold.<sup>829</sup> But a profound feeling of sadness poisoned for Jesus the spectacle that filled all other Israelites with joy and pride. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."<sup>830</sup>

It was not that many honest souls here, as in Galilee, were not touched; but such was the weight of the dominant orthodoxy, that very few dared to avow it. Men feared to discredit themselves in the eyes of the public at Jerusalem by placing themselves in the school of a Galilean. They would have risked expulsion from the synagogue, which, in a mean and bigoted society, was the greatest degradation possible.<sup>831</sup> Excommunication besides carried with it confiscation of all property.<sup>832</sup> By ceasing to be a Jew, a man did not become a Roman; he remained defenceless under the power of a theocratic legislation of the most atrocious severity. One day the lower officers of the Temple, who had been present at one of the discourses of Jesus, and had been enchanted with it, came to confide their doubts to the priests: "Hath any of the rulers believed on him, or of the Pharisees?" was the reply to them; "but this multitude who knoweth not the Law are accursed."<sup>833</sup> Jesus thus remained at Jerusalem, a provincial admired by

<sup>829</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 5, 5: 6.

<sup>830</sup> Matt. 23: 37; Luke 13: 34. These words, like those in Matt. 23: 34, 35, seem to be a quotation from some apocryphal prophecy, perhaps Enoch. (See the passages given in the introduction, pp. 41, 42, and near the close of this chapter, p. 340, note 4.)

<sup>831</sup> John 7: 13; 12: 42, 43; 19: 38.

<sup>832</sup> Ezra 10: 8; Heb. 10: 34; Jerusalem Talmud, *Moëd katon*, 3: 1.

<sup>833</sup> John 7: 45-52.

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provincials like himself, but rejected by all the aristocracy of the nation. Chiefs of schools and of sects were too numerous for any one to be stirred by seeing one more appear. His voice made little impression in Jerusalem. Racial and sectarian prejudices, the open enemies of the spirit of the Gospel, were too deeply rooted.

His teaching in this new world necessarily became greatly modified. His beautiful discourses, the effect of which was always marked upon hearers with youthful imaginations and consciences morally pure, here fell upon stone. He who was so much at ease on the shores of his charming little lake felt constrained and in a strange land when he confronted pedants. His perpetual self-assertion became almost disdainful.<sup>834</sup> He had to become controversialist, jurist, exegetist, and theologian. His conversations, generally so full of grace, were transformed into a rolling fire of disputes, an interminable series of scholastic battles.<sup>835</sup> His harmonious genius was wasted away in insipid argumentations upon the Law and the Prophets,<sup>836</sup> in which we should have preferred not to see him sometimes play the part of aggressor.<sup>837</sup> With a regrettable condescension he lent himself to the captious criticisms to which tactless cavillers subjected him.<sup>838</sup> As a rule he extricated himself from difficulties with much skill. His reasonings, it is true, were often subtle (for simplicity of mind and subtlety are akin; when simplicity reasons, it is always a little sophistical); we find that he sometimes courted misconceptions, and intentionally prolonged them;<sup>839</sup> his reasoning, judged by the rules of Aristotelian logic, was very weak. But when

<sup>834</sup> John 8: 13-18.

<sup>835</sup> Matt. 21: 23-27.

<sup>836</sup> Matt. 22: 23-33.

<sup>837</sup> Ibid. 22: 41-45.

<sup>838</sup> Ibid. 22: 36-40, 46.

<sup>839</sup> See especially the discussions reported in the fourth Gospel, chap. 8. Such passages, we hasten to add, have no other value than as very ancient conjectures regarding his life.

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the unparalleled charm of his mind could be shown, he was triumphant. One day it was intended to embarrass him by presenting an adulteress to him, and asking him what should be done with her. We know the admirable response of Jesus.<sup>840</sup> The fine raillery of a man of the world, tempered by a divine charity, could not be more exquisitely expressed. But the wit allied to moral grandeur is that which fools can least forgive. With his words so just and pure in their taste: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her," Jesus pierced hypocrisy to the heart, and with the same stroke sealed his own death-warrant.

It is probable indeed that, but for the exasperation caused by so many bitter shafts, Jesus might have long been able to remain unnoticed, and might have lost himself in the terrible storm which was soon to overwhelm the whole Jewish nation. The higher priesthood and the Sadducees rather disdained than hated him. The great sacerdotal families, the *Boëthusim*, the family of Hanan, were fanatical only when their peace was threatened. The Sadducees, like Jesus, rejected the "traditions" of the Pharisees.<sup>841</sup> By a very strange singularity, it was these sceptics, denying the resurrection, the oral Law, and the existence of angels, who were the true Jews. Or rather, since the old Law in its simplicity no longer satisfied the religious wants of the time, those who held strictly to it and rejected modern inventions were regarded by devotees as impious, just

<sup>840</sup> John 8: 3-11. This passage did not make part of the original Gospel; it is wanting in the oldest MSS., and the reading is uncertain. Still, it is a very early gospel tradition, as shown in verses 6, 8, which are not in the manner of Luke and later compilers, who insert only what explains itself. The incident seems to have been known to Papias, and was in the Gospel of the Hebrews: see Euseb. *Hist.*, 3: 39; and Appendix, *post*.

<sup>841</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 12, 10: 6; 18, 1: 4.

as an evangelical Protestant of the present day is considered an unbeliever in Catholic countries. At all events, from a party such as this no very strong reaction against Jesus could proceed. The official priesthood, with its attention concentrated on political power and closely connected with the former party, did not understand enthusiastic movements of this kind. It was the middle class Pharisees, the innumerable *soferim* or scribes making a living by the science of "traditions," who took the alarm; and it was their prejudices and interests that in reality were threatened by the doctrine of the new Master.

One of the most constant efforts of the Pharisees was to draw Jesus into the political arena, and to compromise him as being attached to the party of Judas the Gaulonite. Their tactics were clever; for all the deep wisdom of Jesus was required to avoid embroilment with the Roman authority, in his preaching of the kingdom of God. They desired to cut through his ambiguity, and force him to explain himself. One day a group of Pharisees, and of those politicians who were called "Herodians" (probably some of the *Boëthusim*), approached him, and, under the pretence of pious zeal, said, "Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, and carest not for any one. . . . Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?" They hoped for a response which would give them a pretext for delivering him up to Pilate. The answer of Jesus was admirable. He made them show him the image of a coin: "Render therefore," said he, "unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's."<sup>842</sup> Such were the profound words which decided

<sup>842</sup> Matt. 22: 15-22; Mark 12: 13-17; Luke 20: 20-26: comp. Jerusalem Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 2: 3; Rom. 13: 6, 7. It may be doubted whether the incident is literally true. The coins of Herod, Archelaus and Antipas



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the future of Christianity! Words of the most perfect spirituality, and of marvellous justice, which established the separation of the spiritual from the temporal, and laid the foundation of true liberalism and true civilisation!

His gentle and irresistible genius inspired him, when alone with his disciples, with accents full of tenderness. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door unto the fold of the sheep, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. . . . The sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. He goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. . . . The thief cometh not, but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy. He that is an hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth. I am the good shepherd and I know mine own, and mine own know me, and I lay down my life for the sheep."<sup>843</sup> The idea that the crisis of humanity was close at hand frequently recurred to him: "Now," said he, "from the fig-tree learn her parable: When her branch is now become tender, and putteth forth

(before the reign of Caligula) have not the emperor's name or head. Those struck at Jerusalem under the procurators have his name, but not his image (Eckhel, *Doctr.* 3: 497, 498). The coins of Philip have the emperor's name and head (Lévy, *Gesch. der jüd. Münzen*, 67; Madden, *Hist. of Jewish Coinage*, p. 80). But these coins, struck at Paneas, are all pagan; besides, they were not the proper coinage of Jerusalem: founded, therefore, on them, the argument of Jesus has no support. To suppose that he made his reply in view of coins struck outside of Palestine, with the effigy of Tiberius (*Revue numism.* 1860, p. 159), is unlikely. It would seem that the fine Christian aphorism has been antedated. The idea that the effigy on coins is a mark of sovereignty is found, further, in the care taken (at least under the second revolt) to restamp the Roman money, marking it with Jewish images (Lévy, p. 104 *et seq.*; Madden, pp. 176, 203).

<sup>843</sup> John 10: 1-16,—a passage confirmed by the Clementine homilies, 3: 52.

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its leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh. Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”<sup>844</sup>

His powerful eloquence always burst forth when he had to contend with hypocrisy. “The Scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat; all things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe: but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not. Yea, they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger. But all their works do they for to be seen of men: for they make broad their phylacteries<sup>845</sup> and enlarge the borders of their garments,<sup>846</sup> and love the chief place at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutation in the market-places, and to be called Rabbi, rabbi! But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering in to enter.”<sup>847</sup> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows’ houses, even while for a pretence ye make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive greater condemnation. Woe unto you, for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is become so, ye make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves! Woe unto you! for ye are as the tombs which appear not, and the men that walk over them know it not.”<sup>848</sup> Woe unto

<sup>844</sup> Matt. 24: 32; Mark 13: 28; Luke 21: 30; John 4: 35.

<sup>845</sup> *Tolafôth* or *tefillin*—strips of metal or parchment containing passages of the Law, worn by devout Jews on the brow or left arm, so as to obey literally the injunctions of Exodus 13: 9; Deut. 6: 8, and 11: 18.

<sup>846</sup> *Zizith*, red borders or fringes, worn by Jews at the edge of the cloak as a mark of distinction from Pagans (Num. 15: 38, 39; Deut. 22: 12).

<sup>847</sup> Excluding men from the kingdom of God by petty casuistry, which makes admission difficult and deters the simple.

<sup>848</sup> To touch a grave made one “unclean;” hence the boundary was

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you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, judgment, and mercy, and faith: but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at the gnat, and swallow the camel.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter,<sup>849</sup> but within they are full from extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee,<sup>850</sup> cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside thereof may become clean also.<sup>851</sup>

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres,<sup>852</sup> which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but inwardly ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees! hypocrites! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and garnish the tombs of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore, ye witness to carefully marked on the ground (Babylonian Talmud, *Baba bathra*, 58 a; *Baba metsia*, 45 b). The reproach here addressed to the Pharisees is of having devised a multitude of petty precepts which might be violated ignorantly, serving only to multiply legal technicalities.

<sup>849</sup> For this the rules were extremely intricate: see Mark 7: 4.

<sup>850</sup> This epithet “blind,” so often repeated (Matt. 23: 16, 17, 19, 24, 26), very likely refers to the Pharisaic habit of walking with the eyes closed, in affectation of piety (see *ante*, p. 236).

<sup>851</sup> According to Luke 11: 37–41, this was spoken at a repast, in answer to certain vain scruples of the Pharisees.

<sup>852</sup> As tombs were legally “unclean,” it was customary to whitewash them, to warn against approaching them. See p. 339, note 4; also Mishna, *Maasar scheni*, 5: 1; Jerusalem Talmud, *Schekalim*, 1: 1; *Maasar scheni*, 5: 1; *Moëd katon* 1: 2; *Sota* 9: 1; Babylonian Talmud, *Moëd katon*, 5 a. Perhaps there is here an allusion to the “painted Pharisees” (see *ante*, p. 237).

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yourselves, that ye are sons of them that slew the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Well said the Wisdom of God.<sup>853</sup> Therefore, behold, I will send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: some of them shall ye kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city. That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous unto the blood of Zachariah, son of Barachiah, whom ye slew between the sanctuary and the altar.<sup>854</sup> Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation.”<sup>855</sup>

His terrible doctrine of the substitution of the Gentiles—the idea that the kingdom of God was about to be passed over to others, because those for whom it was destined would not receive it,<sup>856</sup> used to recur as a fearful menace against the aristocracy. The title “Son of God,” which he openly assumed in vivid parables, wherein his enemies were depicted as murderers of the heavenly messengers, was an open defiance to the Judaism of the Law.<sup>857</sup> The bold appeal he addressed to the poor was yet more seditious. He declared that he had come, “that they which see not

<sup>853</sup> This passage seems to be from the Book of Enoch. Parts of the revelations ascribed to this patriarch were put in the mouth of the Divine Wisdom: comp. Enoch 37: 1-4; 48: 1, 7; 49: 1; also Book of Jubilees, chap 7, with Luke 11: 49 (See Introduction, p. 336, note 1133). This apocrypha was possibly of Christian origin (See Matt. 23: 34, where some points were doubtless added after the death of Jesus). The citation may be a relatively late addition; it is wanting in Mark.

<sup>854</sup> There is a confusion here, found also in the Targum of Jonathan (Lam. 2: 20), between Zachariah son of Jehoiada and Zachariah the prophet, son of Barachiah. The reference is to the former (2 Chron. 24: 21). With Chronicles, in which the murder of Zachariah is related, the Hebrew canon ends. This murder is the last in the list of murders of holy men, set forth in the order in which they occur in the Bible,—Abel being first.

<sup>855</sup> Matt. 23: 2-36; Mark 12: 38-40; Luke 11: 39-52, and 20: 46, 47.

<sup>856</sup> Matt. 8: 11, 12; 20: 1-16; 21: 28-32, 33-41, 43; 22: 1-14. Mark 12: 1-11. Luke 20: 9-16.

<sup>857</sup> Matt. 21: 37-41; Mark 12: 6; Luke 20: 9; John 10: 33-38

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may see, and that they which see may become blind.”<sup>858</sup> One day, his dislike of the Temple evoked an imprudent speech from him: “I will destroy this Temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.”<sup>859</sup> We do not know what meaning Jesus attached to this saying, in which his disciples sought for strained allegories; but, as only a pretext was wanted, it was quickly fastened upon. It reappeared in the preamble of his death-warrant, and rang in his ears amid the last agonies of Golgotha. These irritating discussions always ended in tumult. The Pharisees cast stones at him,<sup>860</sup> in doing which they only fulfilled an article in the Law, which commanded that every prophet, even a thaumaturgist, who should turn the people from the ancient worship, was to be stoned without a hearing.<sup>861</sup> At other times they called him mad, possessed, a Samaritan,<sup>862</sup> and even sought to slay him.<sup>863</sup> His words were noted in order to draw down upon him the laws of an intolerant theocracy, which had not yet been abrogated by the Roman power.<sup>864</sup>

<sup>858</sup> John 9: 39.

<sup>859</sup> The most authentic form seems to be that in Mark 14: 58; 15: 29; comp. John 2: 19; Matt. 26: 61, and 27: 40; Acts 6: 13, 14.

<sup>860</sup> John 8: 39; 10: 31; 11: 8.

<sup>861</sup> Deut 13: 1-10; comp. Luke 20: 6; John 10: 33; 2 Cor. 11: 25.

<sup>862</sup> John 10: 20.

<sup>863</sup> Ibid. 5: 18; 7: 1, 20, 25, 30; 8: 37, 40.

<sup>864</sup> Luke 11: 53, 54.

## CHAPTER XXII

### *Machinations of the Enemies of Jesus*

Jesus spent the autumn and part of the winter at Jerusalem. The latter season is somewhat cold there.<sup>865</sup> The portico of Solomon, with its covered aisles, was the place where he habitually walked about.<sup>866</sup> This portico, the only vestige extant of the buildings of the ancient Temple, consisted of two galleries, formed by two rows of columns and the wall overlooking the valley of Kedron.<sup>867</sup> It was entered by the Gate of Shushan, the door-posts of which are still to be seen inside what is now called the "golden gate."<sup>868</sup> Even then the other side of the valley was adorned with sumptuous tombs. Some of the monuments, to be seen at the present day, were perhaps the cenotaphs in honour of ancient prophets,<sup>869</sup> which Jesus pointed out when, seated under the portico, he thundered against the official classes, who sheltered their hypocrisy or their vanity behind these colossal piles.<sup>870</sup>

At the end of the month of December, he observed at Jerusalem the feast established by Judas Maccabeus in memory of the purification of the Temple after the sacrileges of Antiochus Epiphanes.<sup>871</sup> It was also called the

<sup>865</sup> Jerusalem is something over 2,500 feet above the sea level, according to Vignes (*Conn. des Temps*, 1886); or 2,440, according to Captain Wilson (*Le Lien*, Aug. 4, 1886).

<sup>866</sup> John 10: 23. See Voguë's restoration in *Le Temple*, etc., pl. 15, 16, pp. 12, 22, 50. (See the description in "History of Israel," 10: 7.)

<sup>867</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 20, 9: 7; *Wars*, 5, 5: 2.

<sup>868</sup> Apparently of the time of Justinian.

<sup>869</sup> See *ante*, p. 253. The so-called "tomb of Zecharia" was perhaps such a monument; compare *Itin. a Burdig. Hierus.*, p. 153 (ed. Schottl).

<sup>870</sup> Matt. 23: 29; Luke 11: 47.

<sup>871</sup> John 10: 22; comp. 1 Macc. 4: 45-54; 2 Macc. 10: 6-8.



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"Feast of Lights," because, during the eight days of the feast, lamps were kept lighted in the houses.<sup>872</sup> Soon afterwards Jesus undertook a journey into Perea, and to the banks of the Jordan—that is to say, into the very districts he had visited some years before, when he followed the school of John,<sup>873</sup> and where he had himself administered baptism. He seems to have found consolation in this journey, especially at Jericho. This city, as the terminus of several important routes, or, it may be, because of its gardens of spices and its richly cultivated soil, was a customs station of importance.<sup>874</sup> The chief receiver, Zaccheus, a rich man, desired to see Jesus.<sup>875</sup> As he was of small stature, he climbed a sycamore tree near the road along which the procession was to pass. Jesus was touched with this simplicity in a prominent man, and, at the risk of giving offence, he determined to stay in the house of Zaccheus. There was indeed much dissatisfaction at his honouring the house of a sinner by this visit. On leaving Jesus declared his host to be a good son of Abraham; and, as though to add to the vexation of the orthodox, Zaccheus became a holy man; he gave, it was said, the half of his possessions to the poor, and restored fourfold to those whom he might have wronged. But this was not the only joy which Jesus experienced in Jericho. As he went out of the town, the beggar Bartimæus<sup>876</sup> pleased him much by persisting in calling him "Son of David," even although

<sup>872</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 12, 7: 7.

<sup>873</sup> John 10: 40; comp. Matt. 19: 1, and 20: 29; Mark 10: 1, 46; Luke 18: 35, and 19: 1. This journey is known to the Synoptics, but by Matt. and Mark is referred to the advance from Galilee by way of Peræa. The topography of Luke is unintelligible unless we suppose chapters 10–18 refer to incidents in the near vicinity of Jerusalem.

<sup>874</sup> Eccles. 24: 18; Strabo, 16, 2: 41; Justin, 36: 3; Josephus, *Antiq.*, 4, 6: 1, 14, 4: 1, and 15, 4: 2; Babyl. Talmud, *Berakoth*, 43 a.

<sup>875</sup> Luke 19: 1–10 (a dubious episode).

<sup>876</sup> Matt. 20: 29; Mark 10: 46–52; Luke 18: 35.

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told to be silent. The cycle of Galilean miracles appeared for a time to be renewed in this country, which in many respects resembled the northern provinces. The delightful oasis of Jericho, which was at that time well watered, must have been one of the most beautiful places in Syria. Josephus speaks of it with the same admiration as of Galilee, and calls it, like the latter province, a "divine land."<sup>877</sup>

After Jesus had accomplished this kind of pilgrimage to the scenes of his earliest prophetic activity, he returned to his beloved abode at Bethany.<sup>878</sup> What must have most afflicted the faithful Galileans at Jerusalem was that he worked no miracles there. Weary of the cold reception which the kingdom of God found in the capital, it would seem that the friends of Jesus wished at times for a great miracle which should powerfully impress Hierosolymite scepticism. A resurrection from the dead necessarily appeared most likely to carry conviction. We may suppose that Mary and Martha opened their minds to Jesus on this matter. Fame already attributed two or three acts of the kind to him.<sup>879</sup> "If some one rose from the dead," the pious sisters no doubt said, "perhaps the living would repent." "No," Jesus must have replied, "even were a man raised from the dead they would not believe."<sup>880</sup> Then, recalling a story familiar to him, that of the good beggar covered with sores who died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom,<sup>881</sup> he may have added, "Lazarus

<sup>877</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 4, 8: 3; comp. *ibid.* 1, 6: 6 and 18: 5; *Antiq.*, 15, 4: 2.

<sup>878</sup> John 11: 1.

<sup>879</sup> Matt. 9: 18, 19, 22-26; Mark 5: 22-24, 35-43; Luke 7: 11-17, and 8: 41, 42, 49-56.

<sup>880</sup> Luke 16: 30, 31.

<sup>881</sup> Quite probably, the allegorical person here called "Lazarus" (אֶלְעָזָר "whom God helps," or לֹא-עֶזֶר, "who has no help") indicating the people of Israel,—the poor man beloved of God, a phrase familiar both to prophet and psalmist [see, respecting the *Anavim*, "History of

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might return and they would not have faith." Later, singular misconceptions arose on this subject. The hypothesis was transformed into an actual fact. People spoke of Lazarus as having been raised from the dead, and of the unpardonable obstinacy of those who could resist such testimony. The sores of Lazarus and the leprosy of Simon the Leper were confused with one another,<sup>882</sup> and the idea that Mary and Martha had a brother called Lazarus,<sup>883</sup> whom Jesus caused to come forth from the tomb,<sup>884</sup> became part of the tradition. When one knows of what inexact rumours and cock-and-bull stories the gossip of an Eastern town consists, one does not even regard it as impossible that a report of this nature may have been current in Jerusalem in the lifetime of Jesus, and that it may have had fatal consequences for him.

Somewhat remarkable indications, in fact, seem to lead us to believe that certain causes proceeding from Bethany contributed to hasten the death of Jesus.<sup>885</sup> At moments one is tempted to suppose that the family at Bethany were guilty of some imprudence, or fell into an excess of zeal. Perhaps the ardent desire of silencing those who scornfully denied the divine mission of their friend drove these women, who were of passionate nature, beyond all bounds. It

the People of Israel," 4: 26],—had been consecrated, before the time of Jesus, by some popular legend, or in some book now lost.

<sup>882</sup> It may be noted how forced and unnatural is the juncture of the verse Luke 16: 23, where we seem to find one of those fusions of alien elements common in Luke. (See introduction, p. 64.)

<sup>883</sup> Observe the curious juxtaposition in John 11: 1, 2: Lazarus is first introduced as an unknown person,—*τὸς ἀσθενῶν Λάζαρος* "one Lazarus, a sick man,"—and is directly after found to be a brother of Mary and Martha.

<sup>884</sup> I have no doubt that John 11: 1-16 is parallel with Luke 14: 19-31: not that the fourth evangelist had the text of Luke before his eyes, but both are derived, doubtless, from kindred traditions. See Value of the Fourth Gospel *passim*.

<sup>885</sup> John 11: 46-53; 12: 2, 9, 10, 17-19.

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must also be remembered that in this impure and depressing Jerusalem Jesus was no longer himself. Not by any fault of his own, but by that of men, his conscience had lost something of its early purity. In despair and driven to extremity, he was no longer his own master. His mission weighed him down and he let himself be carried away by the torrent. In a few days death was to give him his divine freedom and rescue him from the fatal necessities of a position which at every hour demanded more of him, grew more difficult to hold.

The contrast between his ever-increasing exaltation and the indifference of the Jews became wider day by day. At the same time the public authorities began to be bitter against him. In the month of February or early in March a council of the chief priests was assembled,<sup>886</sup> and at this council the question was clearly put: "Can Jesus and Judaism exist together?" To raise the question was to resolve it; and, without being a prophet, as the evangelist would have it, the high priest might very naturally pronounce his cruel axiom: "It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people."

"The high priest of that year," to use an expression of the fourth Gospel, which well expresses the state of abasement to which the sovereign pontificate had been reduced, was Joseph Kaiapha, who had been appointed by Valerius Gratus, and was entirely devoted to the Romans. Since Jerusalem had been under the government of procurators, the office of high priest had become a revocable post, and changes in it took place nearly every year.<sup>887</sup> Kaiapha however held it longer than any one else. He assumed his office in the year 25, and he did not lose it till the

<sup>886</sup> John 10: 47-53.

<sup>887</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 15, 3: 1; 18, 2: 2, and 5: 3; 20, 9: 1, 4. Jerusalem Talmud, *Joma*, 1: 1; Babylonian Talmud, *Joma*, 47 a.

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year 36. Nothing is known of his character, and many circumstances lead to the belief that his power was only nominal. Beside and above him indeed we always see another man who, at the decisive moment we have now reached, appears to have exercised a preponderating power.

This man was Hanan or Annas,<sup>888</sup> son of Seth, and father-in-law of Kaiapha. He had formerly been the high priest, and in reality had kept, amidst the frequent changes in the pontificate, all the authority of the office. He had received the high priesthood from the legate Quirinius, in the year 7 of our era. He lost his office in the year 14, on the accession of Tiberius; but he retained much importance. He was still called "high priest," although out of office,<sup>889</sup> and was consulted upon all grave questions. During fifty years the pontificate remained in his family almost without interruption; five of his sons successively sustained the dignity,<sup>890</sup> besides Kaiapha, who was his son-in-law. His was called the "priestly family," as though the priesthood had become hereditary in it.<sup>891</sup> The chief offices of the Temple were almost all filled by its members.<sup>892</sup> Another family, that of Boëthus, alternated, it is true, with that of Hanan in the pontificate.<sup>893</sup> But the *Boëthusim*, whose fortunes were not of very honourable origin, were much less esteemed by the pious middle-class. Hanan then was in reality the chief of the priestly party. Kaiapha did nothing without him; their names were habitually associated, and that of Hanan was always put first.<sup>894</sup> It will be

<sup>888</sup> The *Ananus* of Josephus: so the Hebrew *Johanan* became in Greek Joannes, or Joannas.

<sup>889</sup> John 18: 15-23; Acts 4: 6.

<sup>890</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 20, 9: 1; comp. Jerusalem Talmud, *Horayoth*, 3: 5; *Tosiphta*, *Menachoth*, 2.

<sup>891</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 15, 3: 1; *Wars*, 4, 5: 6, 7. Acts 4: 6.

<sup>892</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 20, 9: 3; Babylonian Talmud, *Pesachim*, 57 a.

<sup>893</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 15, 9: 3; 19, 6: 2, and 8: 1.

<sup>894</sup> Luke 3: 2.

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understood in fact that under this *régime* of an annual pontificate, changed according to the caprice of the procurators, an old high priest, who had kept the secret of the traditions, had seen many younger than himself succeed one another, and had retained sufficient influence to get the office delegated to persons who in family rank were subordinate to him, must have been a very important personage. Like all the Temple aristocracy, he was a Sadducee,<sup>895</sup> "a sect," says Josephus, "particularly severe in its judgments."<sup>896</sup> All his sons were violent persecutors also. One of them, called like his father, Hanan, caused James, the brother of the Lord, to be stoned, under circumstances not unlike those of the death of Jesus.<sup>897</sup> The family spirit was haughty, bold, and cruel,<sup>898</sup> it had that particular species of proud and sullen wickedness which characterises Jewish politics. Thus it is upon Hanan and his family that the responsibility of all the acts which followed must rest. It was Hanan, or the party he represented, who really put Jesus to death. Hanan was the principal actor in the terrible drama, and, far more than Kaiapha, far more than Pilate, ought to bear the weight of mankind's maledictions.

It is in the mouth of Kaiapha that the author of the fourth Gospel chooses to place the decisive words that led to sentence of death on Jesus.<sup>899</sup> It was supposed that the high priest possessed a certain gift of prophecy, and his declaration thus became an oracle full of profound significance to the Christian community. But such a declaration, whoever he that pronounced it might be, expressed the

<sup>895</sup> Acts 5: 17.

<sup>896</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 20, 9: 1; comp. *Megillath Taanith*, chap. 4 with schol.; Tosiphta, *Menachoth*, 2.

<sup>897</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 20, 9: 1 (there is no good reason to doubt the authority).

<sup>898</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>899</sup> John 11: 49, 50; comp. 18: 14.



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feeling of the whole sacerdotal party. This party was strongly opposed to popular seditions. It sought to suppress religious enthusiasts, foreseeing, and that rightly, that by their impassioned preaching they would bring about the total ruin of the nation. Although the excitement created by Jesus was in nowise temporal, the priests saw, as the final consequence of the agitation, an aggravation of the Roman yoke and the overthrow of the Temple, the source of their wealth and honours.<sup>900</sup> Certainly the causes which, thirty-seven years later, were to effect the ruin of Jerusalem did not proceed from infant Christianity. They arose in Jerusalem itself, and not in Galilee. It cannot be said, however, that the charge made in this matter by the priests was so groundless that we are necessarily to consider it as insincere. In a general sense, Jesus, had he succeeded, would have really caused the ruin of the Jewish nation. According to principles, universally admitted by all ancient statecraft, Hanan and Kaiapha were thus right in saying: "Better the death of one man than the ruin of a people!" In our opinion such reasoning is detestable. But it has been that of conservative parties from the beginning of all human societies. The "party of order" (I use the expression in its mean and narrow sense) has ever been the same. Considering the highest duty of government to be the prevention of popular commotions, it believes it performs a patriotic act when, by judicial murder, it averts the tumultuous effusion of blood. With little thought of the future, it does not dream that, in declaring war against all innovations, it incurs the risk of crushing the idea that is one day destined to triumph. The death of Jesus was one of the thousand illustrations of this policy. The movement he led was entirely spiritual, but still it was a movement; hence the men of order, persuaded that the thing

<sup>900</sup> John 11: 48.

essential for humanity is to remain quiet, felt themselves bound to prevent the new spirit from extending. Never was seen a more striking example of how greatly such a procedure defeats its own object. Left free, Jesus would have worn himself out in a desperate struggle with the impossible. The unintelligent hate of his foes decided the success of his work, and sealed his divinity.

The death of Jesus was thus decided in the month of February or the beginning of March.<sup>901</sup> But he still escaped for a short time. He withdrew to an obscure town called Ephraim or Ephron, in the direction of Bethel, a short day's journey from Jerusalem.<sup>902</sup> There he spent a few weeks with his disciples, letting the storm pass over. But orders for his arrest, the moment he appeared at Jerusalem, were given. The feast of the Passover was drawing nigh, and it was thought that Jesus, according to his custom, would come to celebrate it at Jerusalem.<sup>903</sup>

<sup>901</sup> John 11: 53.

<sup>902</sup> John 11:54: comp. 2 Chron. 13: 19; Josephus, *Wars*, 15, 9: 9; Eusebius and Jerome, *De situ et nomin. loc. hebræ.*, at the words 'Εφρών and 'Εφραῖμ. It is generally identified with *Tayyibeh*.

<sup>903</sup> John 11: 55, 56. In the order of events throughout this portion we follow the scheme of John. The Synoptics seem ill-informed as to the period of time immediately preceding the crucifixion.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### *The Last Week*

Jesus in fact set out with his disciples to see, once more, and for the last time, the unbelieving city. The hopes of his followers had grown more and more exalted. All believed, in going up to Jerusalem, that the kingdom of God was about to be realised there.<sup>904</sup> The fact of men's impiety being at its height was regarded as a great sign that the consummation was at hand. Their conviction in the matter was such, that they were already disputing for precedence in the kingdom.<sup>905</sup> This was, it is said, the moment chosen by Salome to ask, on behalf of her sons, the two seats on the right and left of the Son of man.<sup>906</sup> The Master, on the other hand, was beset by serious thoughts. Sometimes he permitted a gloomy resentment against his enemies to show itself; he related the parable of a nobleman, who went to take possession of a kingdom in a far country; but no sooner had he departed than his fellow-citizens wished to get rid of him. The king returned, and commanded those who did not wish him to reign over them to be brought before him, and had them all put to death.<sup>907</sup> At other times Jesus summarily destroyed the illusions of the disciples. As they walked along the stony roads to the north of Jerusalem, he pensively preceded the group of his companions. All gazed on him in silence, with fear in their hearts, not daring to question him. Already, on different occasions, he had spoken to them of his future

<sup>904</sup> Luke 19: 11.

<sup>905</sup> Luke 22: 24-26.

<sup>906</sup> Matt. 20: 20-23; Mark 10: 35-40.

<sup>907</sup> Luke 19: 12-27.

sufferings, and they had listened to him reluctantly.<sup>908</sup> At last he spoke, and, no longer concealing his presentiments, told them of his approaching end.<sup>909</sup> There was great sorrow in the whole company. The disciples had been expecting to see the sign soon appear in the clouds. The inaugural cry of the kingdom of God: "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,"<sup>910</sup> already in joyous accents resounded in their ears. The fearful prospect he unfolded troubled them. At every step of the fatal road the kingdom of God drew nearer or receded farther in the mirage of their dreams. As to Jesus, he grew confirmed in the belief that he was about to die, but that his death would save the world.<sup>911</sup> The misunderstanding between him and his disciples became deeper at every moment.

The custom was to come to Jerusalem several days before the Passover, in order to prepare for it. Jesus arrived late, and for a moment his enemies thought their hope of seizing him was frustrated.<sup>912</sup> On the sixth day before the feast (Saturday, 8th of Nisan,<sup>913</sup> or 28th of March) he at last reached Bethany. He entered, according to his habit, the house of Martha and Mary, or of Simon the leper. He was given a great reception. There was a dinner at Simon the leper's,<sup>914</sup> at which many persons assembled, attracted by the desire of seeing the new prophet, and also, it is said, of seeing the Lazarus of whom for the last few days so many things had been related. It may be that Simon the leper, seated at table, already passed as being the al-

<sup>908</sup> Matt. 16: 21-23; Mark 8: 31-33.

<sup>909</sup> Matt. 20: 17-19; Mark 10: 32-34; Luke 9: 18-22, 31.

<sup>910</sup> Matt. 23: 39; Luke 13: 35.

<sup>911</sup> Matt. 20: 28.

<sup>912</sup> John 11: 56.

<sup>913</sup> The Passover was kept on the 14th of the month Nisan, which in the year 33 began on a Saturday, making the 14th fall on Friday; but the uncertainty of the Jewish calendar renders all calculation doubtful. See *Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscr.* etc. 23, pt. 2, p. 367 (new series).

<sup>914</sup> Matt. 26: 6; Mark 14: 3; comp. Luke 7: 40, 43, 44.

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leged resuscitated man, and attracted attention. Martha waited on the guests according to her custom.<sup>915</sup> Apparently it was sought, by an increased display of respect, to conquer the indifference of the public, and to assert the high dignity of their guest. Mary, in order to make the event more of a festival, entered during dinner, bearing a vase of perfume which she poured upon the feet of Jesus. She then broke the vase in accordance with an old custom of breaking the vessel that had been employed in the entertainment of a stranger of distinction.<sup>916</sup> Then, testifying her worship to unparalleled excess, she prostrated herself at the feet of her Master and wiped them with her long hair.<sup>917</sup> All the house was filled with the sweet odour of the perfume, to the great delight of every one save the avaricious Judas of Kerioth. Considering the thrifty habits of the community, this was certainly prodigality. The greedy treasurer immediately calculated for how much the perfume might have been sold, and what it would have realised for the poor. This not very affectionate feeling, which seemed to place something above Jesus, dissatisfied the latter. He liked to be honoured, for honours served his purpose and strengthened his title of Son of David. Therefore when they spoke to him of the poor, he replied rather sharply: "Ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always." And, exalting himself, he promised immortality to the woman who at that critical moment gave him a token of love.<sup>918</sup>

<sup>915</sup> This would not be unlikely even if it were not in her own house. Such service at another's board, from a near friend, or relative, is common in the East.

<sup>916</sup> I have seen the same thing done at Sour.

<sup>917</sup> We here call to mind the attitude of the guests, reclining on the *triclinium*, or divan, with their feet on their own level, not hid under the table.

<sup>918</sup> Matt. 26: 6-13; Mark 14: 3-9; John 11: 2, and 12: 2-8; comp. Luke 7: 36-50.

The next day (Sunday, 9th of Nisan) Jesus descended from Bethany to Jerusalem.<sup>919</sup> When, at the bend of the road on the summit of the Mount of Olives, he saw the city lying before him, it is said he wept over it, and addressed to it a last appeal.<sup>920</sup> On the slope of the mountain, near the suburb, chiefly inhabited by priests, which was called *Bethphage*,<sup>921</sup> he felt a momentary human pleasure.<sup>922</sup> His arrival was noised abroad. The Galileans who had come to the feast were highly elated by it, and prepared a little triumph for him. An ass was brought to him, followed, according to custom, by its colt.<sup>923</sup> The Galileans laid their finest clothes upon the back of the humble animal as saddle-cloths, and seated him thereon, while others spread their garments upon the road, and strewed it with green branches. The multitude which preceded and followed him, carrying palms, cried: "Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" Some even gave him the title of king of Israel.<sup>924</sup> "Master, rebuke thy disciples," said the Pharisees to him. "I tell you that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out," answered Jesus, and entered into the city.

The Hierosolymites, who scarcely knew him, asked who

<sup>919</sup> John 12: 12.

<sup>920</sup> Luke 19: 41-44 ("If thou hadst known," etc.).

<sup>921</sup> Matt. 21: 1; Mark 11: 1; Luke 19: 29. Mishna, *Menachoth*, 11: 2. Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 14 b; *Pesachim*, 63 b, 91 a; *Sota*, 45 a; *Baba Metsia*, 88 a; *Menachoth*, 78 b, *Sifra*, 104 b. Eusebius and Jerome, *De situ*, etc. (ed. of Martianay), 2: 442. Jer. *Epitaph. Paulæ* (4: 676); comm. in Matt. 21: 1 (4: 94); *Lex. græc. nom.* etc. (2: 121, 122).

<sup>922</sup> Matt. 21: 1-9; Mark 11: 1-10; Luke 19: 29-36; John 12: 12-16. The comparison with Zech. 9: 9 throws a slight doubt upon this incident: the triumphal entrance riding upon an ass was a messianic token. Comp. Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 98 b; Midrash, *Bereschith rabba*, 98; Midrash, *Koheleth*, 1: 9.

<sup>923</sup> This petty incident may have arisen from a misunderstanding of the passage in Zechariah, owing to the ignorance of the New Testament writers as to the rules of Hebrew parallelism. Comp. John 19: 24.

<sup>924</sup> Luke 19: 38; John 12: 13.



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he was: "It is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth, in Galilee," was the reply. Jerusalem was a city of about 50,000 souls.<sup>925</sup> A trifling event, such as the entrance of a stranger, however little celebrated he might be, or the arrival of a band of provincials, or a movement of people to the avenues of the city, could not fail, under ordinary circumstances, to be quickly noised about. But during seasons of festival the confusion was extreme.<sup>926</sup> Jerusalem at such times was given over to strangers; and it was amongst the latter that the excitement appears to have been highest. Some Greek-speaking proselytes who had come to the feast had their curiosity stimulated, and wished to see Jesus. They addressed themselves to his disciples; but the result of the interview is not known.<sup>927</sup> Jesus, as his habit was, went to pass the night at his beloved village of Bethany.<sup>928</sup> On the three following days (Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday) he regularly descended to Jerusalem, returning after sunset either to Bethany or to the farms on the western side of the Mount of Olives, where he had many friends.<sup>929</sup>

During these last days a deep sadness appears to have filled the soul of Jesus, which was generally so joyous and serene. All the narratives agree in relating that before his arrest he went through a brief phase of misgiving and trouble, a kind of agony in anticipation. According to some,

<sup>925</sup> The number one hundred and twenty thousand (Hecatæus in Josephus, c. *Ap.* 1: 22) seems too great. Cicero apparently slurs it as a petty fortress [in the epithet *Hierosolymarius* applied to Pompey]: *Ad Att.* 2: 9. The old walls, however described, do not admit a population fourfold the present, which is less than fifteen thousand. See Robinson, *Bibl. Res.* 1: 421, 2d ed.; Fergusson, *Topography of Jerusalem*, 51; Foster, *Syria and Palestine*. 82.

<sup>926</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 2, 14: 3; 6, 9: 3.

<sup>927</sup> John 12: 20-22.

<sup>928</sup> Matt. 21: 17; Mark 11: 11.

<sup>929</sup> Matt. 21: 17, 18; Mark 11: 11, 12, 19; Luke 21: 37, 38.

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he suddenly exclaimed, "Now is my soul troubled. . . . Father, save me from this hour."<sup>930</sup> It was believed that a voice from heaven was heard at that moment; others said that an angel came to console him.<sup>931</sup> According to one widely-spread version, the incident occurred in the garden of Gethsemane. Jesus, it was said, went about a stone's throw from his sleeping disciples, taking with him only Cephas and the two sons of Zebedee. Then he fell on his face and prayed. His soul was sick even unto death; a terrible anguish weighed him down; but resignation to the divine will sustained him.<sup>932</sup> This scene, by reason of the instinctive art which regulated the compilation of the Synoptics, and often led them to follow rules of adaptability and effect in the arrangement of the narrative, is stated as having happened on the last night of the life of Jesus, and at the moment of his arrest. Were this version the true one, we should scarcely understand why John, who had been the immediate witness of so touching an episode, should not have spoken of it to his disciples, and that the author of the fourth Gospel, in the very circumstantial narrative which he gives of the evening of the Thursday, should have omitted mention of it.<sup>933</sup>

All that one can safely say is, that, during his last days, the enormous weight of the mission he had accepted bore cruelly upon Jesus. For a moment human nature asserted itself. It may be that he began to have doubts about his work. Terror and hesitation seized him and cast him into

<sup>930</sup> John 12: 27-32. The lofty tone of this evangelist and his exclusive attention to the divine office of Jesus, naturally effaced from the narrative those traits of human weakness related by the Synoptics.

<sup>931</sup> Luke 22: 43; John 12: 28, 29.

<sup>932</sup> Matt. 26: 36-41; Mark 14: 32-38; Luke 22: 39-46.

<sup>933</sup> This would be the less intelligible, since the fourth evangelist makes it a point to put in relief circumstances personal to the Apostle John, or those which he alone had witnessed (1: 35-37; 13: 23-26; 18: 15-18; 19: 25-27, 35; 20: 2-5; 21: 20-25).

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a state of exhaustion worse than death itself. He who has sacrificed his repose and the legitimate rewards of life to a great idea ever experiences a feeling of revulsion when the image of death presents itself for the first time to him, and seeks to persuade him that all has been in vain. Perhaps some of those touching memories preserved by the strongest souls, and at times sharp as a sword, came to him at this moment. Did he remember the clear fountains of Galilee, where he might have found refreshment; the vine and the fig-tree under which he might have rested, the young maidens who perhaps might have consented to love him? Did he curse the cruel destiny which had denied him the joys granted to all others? Did he regret his too lofty nature, and, victim of his greatness, mourn that he had not remained a simple workman in Nazareth? We know not. For all these inward troubles were evidently a sealed chapter to his disciples. They understood nothing of them, and by simple conjectures supplied what in their Master's great soul was obscure to them. It is at least certain that his divine nature soon regained the supremacy. He might still have escaped death; but he would not. Love of his work sustained him. He was willing to drink the cup to its dregs. Henceforth we behold Jesus entirely himself and with his character unclouded. The subtleties of the controversialist, the credulity of the thaumaturgist and exorcist are forgotten. There remains but the incomparable hero of the Passion, the founder of the rights of free conscience, the complete exemplar whom all suffering souls will contemplate to fortify and to console themselves.

The triumph of Bethphage—the audacity of the provincial folk in celebrating the advent of their Messiah-King at the very gates of Jerusalem—completed the exasperation of the Pharisees and the Temple aristocracy. Another council was held on the Wednesday (12th of Nisan) in the

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house of Joseph Kaiapha.<sup>934</sup> The immediate arrest of Jesus was resolved upon. A great idea of order and conservative policy governed all their plans. The question was how a scene might be avoided. As the feast of the Passover, which in that year began on the Friday evening, was a time of bustle and excitement, it was resolved to anticipate it. Jesus being popular,<sup>935</sup> they feared an outbreak. Although it was customary to put in relief the solemnities to which the whole nation gathered by the execution of those rebellious to priestly authority—a sort of *auto-da-fé* designed to impress the people with religious terror<sup>936</sup>—it was probably arranged that such executions should not fall on festal days.<sup>937</sup> The arrest was therefore decided for the next day, Thursday. It was resolved also not to apprehend him in the Temple, where he came every day,<sup>938</sup> but to observe his habits, that he might be seized in some quiet spot. The agents of the priests sounded his disciples, in the hope of obtaining useful information from their weakness or simplicity. They found what they sought in Judas of Kerioth. This wretch, from motives impossible to explain, betrayed his Master, gave all the necessary information, and even undertook himself (although such an excess of vileness is scarcely credible) to guide the troop which was to effect the arrest. The remembrance of horror which the folly or wickedness of the man has left in Christian tradition must have given rise to some exaggeration on this point. Judas until now had been a disciple like the others; he even had the title of apostle; and he had performed miracles and driven out demons. Legend, which always uses strong

<sup>934</sup> Matt. 26: 1-5. Mark 14: 1, 2. Luke 22: 1, 2.

<sup>935</sup> Matt. 21: 46.

<sup>936</sup> Mishna, *Sanhedrin*, 11: 4; Babylonian Talmud, *ibid.* 89 a (comp. Acts 12: 3-5).

<sup>937</sup> Mishna, *Sanhedrin*, 4: 1.

<sup>938</sup> Matt. 26: 55.

and decisive language, describes the occupants of the room in which the last supper was taken as eleven saints and one reprobate. Reality does not proceed by such absolute categories. Avarice, which the Synoptics give as the motive of the crime in question, does not suffice to explain it. It would be very singular for a man who kept the purse, and knew what he would lose by the death of his chief, to give up the profits of his position<sup>939</sup> in exchange for a very small sum of money.<sup>940</sup> Had the self-love of Judas been wounded by the rebuke he had received at the dinner at Bethany? Even this would not explain his conduct. The fourth evangelist would have us look upon him as a thief, an unbeliever from the first,<sup>941</sup> but for this there is no probability. His action might rather be ascribed to some feeling of jealousy or dissension amongst the disciples. The peculiar hatred towards Judas<sup>942</sup> to be remarked in the Gospel attributed to John confirms this hypothesis. Less pure in heart than the others, Judas, from the nature of his office, must have unconsciously grown narrow-minded. By a habit characteristic of men engaged in active duties, he had come to consider the interests of the treasury as superior even to those of the work which it was intended to serve. The treasurer must have slain the apostle. The murmurs which escaped him at Bethany seem to imply that occasionally he thought the Master cost his spiritual family too dear. No doubt this petty economy of his had at many other times caused friction in the little community.

Without denying that Judas of Kerioth may have helped to bring about the arrest of his Master, we still believe that the curses heaped upon him are somewhat unjust. In his

<sup>939</sup> John 12: 6.

<sup>940</sup> The fourth Gospel does not even allude to pay. The "thirty pieces of silver" of the Synoptics are taken from Zech. 11: 12, 13.

<sup>941</sup> John 6: 65; 12: 6.

<sup>942</sup> John 6: 65, 71, 72; 12: 6; 13: 2, 27-30.

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action there was perhaps more awkwardness than perversity. The moral conscience of the man of the people is quick and correct, but unstable and inconsistent. It is unable to resist the impulse of the moment. The secret societies of the republican party had within them much earnestness and sincerity, and yet informers were very numerous among them. A trifling spite sufficed to turn a partisan into a traitor. But if foolish desire for a few pieces of silver turned the head of poor Judas, he does not appear to have lost moral feeling altogether, since, when he had seen the consequences of his sin, he repented,<sup>943</sup> and, it is said, killed himself.

Each moment of this period is solemn, and counts more than whole ages in the history of humanity. We have arrived at Thursday, 13th of Nisan (2nd of April). On the evening of the next day the festival of the Passover began with the feast in which the Paschal lamb was eaten. The festival continued for seven days, during which unleavened bread was eaten. The first and the last of these seven days were peculiarly solemn in character. The disciples were already engaged in preparing for the feast.<sup>944</sup> As to Jesus, there is reason to believe that he was aware of the treachery of Judas, and suspected the fate that awaited him. In the evening he took his last repast with his disciples. It was not the ritual feast of the Passover, as was afterwards supposed, owing to an error of a day in reckoning,<sup>945</sup> but from the primitive church this supper of the Thursday was the true Passover, the seal of the new

<sup>943</sup> Matt. 27: 3-5.

<sup>944</sup> Matt. 26: 17-19; Mark 14: 12-16; Luke 22: 7-13; John 13: 29.

<sup>945</sup> This is the view of the Synoptics (Matt. 26: 17; Mark 14: 12; Luke 22: 7-15), and consequently of Justin (*Tryph.* 17, 88, 97, 100, 111). The fourth Gospel, on the contrary, formally assumes that Jesus died on the very day the lamb was eaten (13: 1, 2, 29; 18: 28; 19: 14, 31). The Talmud (surely a weak authority on such a point) also makes Jesus



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covenant. Every disciple attached his dearest memories to it; and numerous touching traits of the Master which each one preserved were associated with this repast, which became the corner-stone of Christian piety, and the starting-point of its most fruitful institutions.

There can be no doubt indeed that the tender love which filled the heart of Jesus for the little church around him overflowed at this moment.<sup>946</sup> His strong and serene soul grew light, even under the weight of the gloomy forebodings which beset him. He had a word for each of his friends; two of them especially, John and Peter, were the objects of tender marks of attachment. John was reclining on the divan by the side of Jesus, with his head resting upon the Master's breast.<sup>947</sup> Towards the close of the repast, the secret which weighed upon the heart of Jesus almost escaped him: he said, "Verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me."<sup>948</sup> To these simple men it was a moment of anguish; they looked upon one another, and each questioned himself. Judas was present; possibly Jesus, who for some time had had reason to suspect him, sought by this remark to elicit from his looks or his em-

die "the day before the Passover" (Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 43 a, 67 a). A serious objection to this opinion is that late in the second century the churches of Asia Minor, professing a doctrine on the Passover [Easter], a doctrine that seems to contradict the view of the fourth Gospel, appealed to the authority of the Apostle John himself and his disciples in support of a doctrine consenting with the account of the Synoptics. (Polycrates in Euseb. *Hist.* 5: 34: comp. *Chron. pasc.* p. 6 *et seq.*, ed., Du Cange.) But the question is very obscure. John and his disciples may have kept the Passover, like all the primitive Apostolic school, on the 14th of Nisan, not because they believed that Jesus had eaten the lamb on that day, but because they believed that he, the true paschal lamb (see John 1: 29, and 19: 36, with Rev. 5: 6), had been slain on that day.

<sup>946</sup> John 13: and the succeeding chapters.

<sup>947</sup> John 13: 23; Polycrates in Euseb. *Hist.* 5: 24.

<sup>948</sup> Matt. 13: 21-25; Mark 14: 18-21; Luke 22: 21-23; John 13: 21-30, and 21: 29.

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barrassed manner a confession of his sin. But the treacherous disciple did not lose countenance; he even dared, it is said, to ask with the others: "Is it I, Master?"

Meanwhile Peter's good and upright soul was in torment. With a sign he prompted John to endeavour to ascertain of whom the Master was speaking. John, who could converse with Jesus without being overheard, asked him the meaning of the enigma. Jesus having only suspicions, did not wish to give any name; he only told John to watch well him to whom he was going to offer a piece of bread dipped in the sauce. At the same time he soaked the bread and offered it to Judas.<sup>949</sup> John and Peter alone had cognizance of the fact. Jesus addressed to Judas a few words which contained a bitter reproach, but were not understood by those present. They thought that Jesus was simply giving him orders for the morrow's feast, and he went out.<sup>950</sup>

At the time, this repast did not impress any one; and, apart from the apprehensions confided by the Master to his disciples, who only half understood them, nothing extraordinary happened. But after the death of Jesus a singularly solemn significance was attached to this evening, and the imagination of believers clad it with a colouring of sweet mysticism. The last hours of a dear friend are those we best remember. By an inevitable illusion, we attribute to the conversations we have then had with him a meaning which only death gives them; into a few hours we concentrate the memories of many years. The majority of the disciples saw their Master no more after the supper of which we have just spoken. It was the farewell banquet.

<sup>949</sup> In the East, as a mark of favour to a guest, the master of the feast gives him, once or twice during the repast, morsels of food which he compounds and seasons as he will.

<sup>950</sup> John 13: 21-30, which relieves the improbabilities of the Synoptic account.

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At this meal, as at many others,<sup>951</sup> Jesus practised his mysterious rite of the breaking of bread. As it was an early belief in the church that the repast in question took place on the day of the Passover, and was the Paschal feast, the idea was naturally conceived that the Eucharistic institution was founded at this supreme moment. Starting from the hypothesis that Jesus knew beforehand the precise moment of his death, the disciples were necessarily led to suppose that he reserved a number of important acts for his last hours. As moreover one of the fundamental ideas of the first Christians was that the death of Jesus had been a sacrifice, superseding all those of the ancient Law, the "Last Supper,"<sup>952</sup> which was supposed to have taken place once for all on the eve of the Passion, became the one supreme sacrifice—the act which constituted the new covenant—the sign of the blood shed for the salvation of all men. The bread and wine, brought into relation with death itself, were thus the image of the new Testament sealed by Jesus with his sufferings—the commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ until his advent.<sup>953</sup>

At a very early date this mystery was embodied in a small sacramental narrative, which we possess under four forms<sup>954</sup> with a strong mutual resemblance. The fourth evangelist, preoccupied with Eucharistic ideas,<sup>955</sup> who relates the Last Supper with so much prolixity, connecting with it so many incidents and discourses,<sup>956</sup> is not acquainted with this narrative. This is a proof that in the sect whose tradition he represents the Eucharistic institution was not regarded as a special feature of the Lord's Supper. For

<sup>951</sup> Luke 24: 30, 31, 35, represents the breaking of bread as a characteristic act of Jesus (comp. pp. 218–223).

<sup>952</sup> Luke 22: 20.

<sup>953</sup> 1 Cor. 11: 26.

<sup>954</sup> Matt. 26: 26–28; Mark 14: 22–24; Luke 22: 19–21; 1 Cor. 11: 23–25.

<sup>955</sup> Chap. 6.

<sup>956</sup> Chaps. 13–17.

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the fourth evangelist the rite of the Last Supper is the washing of feet. It is probable that in certain primitive Christian families this latter rite obtained an importance which it has since lost.<sup>957</sup> No doubt Jesus had on some occasions practised it to give his disciples a lesson in brotherly humility. It was connected with the eve of his death, by reason of the tendency to group round the Last Supper all the great moral and ritual recommendations of Jesus.

A lofty feeling of love, of concord, of charity, and of mutual deference animated moreover the memories which were cherished of the last hours of Jesus.<sup>958</sup> It is always the unity of his Church, constituted by him or by his Spirit, which is the soul of the symbols and discourses attributed by Christian tradition to these hallowed moments. "A new commandment I give unto you," said he, "that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."<sup>959</sup> Even at this last moment some rivalries and struggles for precedence arose.<sup>960</sup> Jesus remarked that if he, the Master, had been in the midst of his disciples as their servant, how much more ought they to submit themselves one to another. According to some, in drinking the wine, he said, "I will not drink from henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's king-

<sup>957</sup> John 13: 14, 15; comp. Matt. 26: 26-30; Luke 22: 19-20.

<sup>958</sup> John 13-17. The discourses contained in these chapters cannot be taken as historical. They are full of turns of thought and expressions which are not at all in the manner of Jesus' own discourses, but, on the contrary, fall exactly into the habitual style of the writings ascribed to John. Thus the expression "little children" as a form of address (John 13: 33) is very frequent in the first epistle bearing the name of John, but is never heard from the lips of Jesus.

<sup>959</sup> John 13: 33-35; 15: 12-17.

<sup>960</sup> Luke 22: 24-27; comp. John 13: 4-11.

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dom.”<sup>961</sup> According to others, he promised them soon a heavenly feast, where they would be seated on thrones by his side.<sup>962</sup>

It seems as though, towards the end of the evening, the forebodings of Jesus took possession of the disciples also. All felt that a grave peril threatened the Master, and that a crisis was at hand. For a moment Jesus thought of precautions, and spoke of swords. There were two in the company. “It is enough,” said he.<sup>963</sup> He did not follow this idea out however, seeing clearly that timid provincials would not stand before the armed force of the great powers of Jerusalem. Cephas, full of enthusiasm, and feeling sure of himself, swore that he would go with him to prison and to death. Jesus, with his usual acuteness, expressed doubts about him. According to a tradition, which probably proceeded from Peter himself, Jesus declared that Peter would be found wanting before the crowing of the cock.<sup>964</sup> All, like Cephas, vowed that they would not fail him.

<sup>961</sup> Matt. 31: 29; Mark 14: 25; Luke 22: 18.

<sup>962</sup> Luke 22: 29, 30.

<sup>963</sup> Luke 22: 36-38.

<sup>964</sup> Matt. 26: 31-35; Mark 14: 29-31; Luke 22: 31-33; John 13: 36-38.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### *The Arrest and Trial of Jesus*

Night had fallen<sup>965</sup> when they left the room.<sup>966</sup> Jesus, as was his custom, passed through the valley of Kedron; and, accompanied by his disciples, went into the garden of Gethsemane, at the foot of the Mount of Olives,<sup>967</sup> where he sat down. Overawing his friends by his majesty, he watched and prayed. They were sleeping near him, when suddenly an armed troop appeared carrying lighted torches. It was the guards of the Temple, armed with staves, a kind of police force which the priests had been allowed to maintain. They were supported by a detachment of Roman soldiers with their swords. The warrant of arrest emanated from the high priest and the Sanhedrim.<sup>968</sup> Judas, knowing the habits of Jesus, had pointed out this place as being that where he might be most easily surprised, and, according to the unanimous tradition of the earliest times, himself accompanied the detachment.<sup>969</sup> By some accounts he carried his hateful conduct so far as to make a kiss the sign of his betrayal.<sup>970</sup> However this may be, it is certain that there was some attempt at resistance on the part of the disciples.<sup>971</sup> Peter, it is said, drew his

<sup>965</sup> John 13: 30.

<sup>966</sup> The singing of a hymn, related in Matt. 26: 30, Mark 14: 26, and Justin's *Trypho*, 106, accords with the Synoptic view that the Last Supper was the Passover feast. Psalms were sung both before and after this feast: see Babylonian Talmud, *Pesachim*, 9: 3, fol. 118 a.

<sup>967</sup> Matt. 26: 36; Mark 14: 32; Luke 22: 39; John 18: 1, 2.

<sup>968</sup> Matt. 26: 47; Mark 14: 43; John 18: 3, 12.

<sup>969</sup> Ibid.; also Luke 22: 47; Acts 1: 16. 1 Cor. 11: 23 seems to imply it.

<sup>970</sup> The Synoptic tradition. In the fourth Gospel Jesus is said to have voluntarily surrendered himself (John 18: 4-8).

<sup>971</sup> Here the several traditions are in accord.



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sword, and wounded the ear of Malchus, one of the servants of the high priest.<sup>972</sup> Jesus made this opposition cease, and gave himself up to the soldiers. Weak and incapable of effective resistance, especially against authorities with so much prestige, the disciples took to flight and dispersed; Peter and John alone did not lose sight of their Master. Another young man—perhaps Mark—followed him, covered with a light garment. It was sought to arrest him, but the young man fled, leaving his tunic in the hands of the officers.<sup>973</sup>

The course which the priests had determined to take against Jesus was in perfect conformity with the established law. The procedure against the “corrupter” (*mésith*) who seeks to corrupt purity of religion is explained in the Talmud, with details, the naïve impudence of which provokes a smile. A judicial ambush is laid down as an essential part of the criminal’s examination. When a man was accused of being a “corrupter,” two witnesses were suborned who were hidden behind a partition; and it was then arranged that the accused should be brought into an adjoining room, where he could be heard by these two witnesses without his perceiving them. Two candles were lighted near him, so that it might be conclusively proved that the witnesses “saw him.”<sup>974</sup> He was then forced to repeat his blasphemy, and urged to retract it. If he persisted in it, the witnesses who had heard him took him to the tribunal, and he was stoned to death. The Talmud adds that Jesus was treated in this way; that he was condemned on the testimony of two witnesses who had been suborned, and

<sup>972</sup> Matt. 26: 51, 52; Mark 14: 47; Luke 22: 50, 51; John 18: 10. (Luke relates that Jesus miraculously healed the severed ear.)

<sup>973</sup> Mark 14: 51, 52. Mark (who alone tells the incident) lived at Jerusalem (Acts 12: 12).

<sup>974</sup> On a criminal charge, only eyewitnesses were admitted: Mishna, *Sanhedrin*, 4: 5.

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that the crime of "corruption" is moreover the only one for which witnesses are thus prepared.<sup>975</sup>

We learn indeed from the disciples of Jesus that the crime with which their Master was charged was that of "corruption";<sup>976</sup> and, apart from some trifling details, fruits of the rabbinical imagination, the Gospel narrative exactly corresponds with the procedure described in the Talmud. The scheme of the enemies of Jesus was to convict him, by the testimony of witnesses and by his own avowals, of blasphemy and outrage on the Mosaic religion, to condemn him to death according to law, and then to have the sentence confirmed by Pilate. The whole sacerdotal authority, as we have already seen, was practically in the hands of Hanan. The warrant of arrest probably came from him. It was before this powerful man that Jesus was brought in the first instance.<sup>977</sup> Hanan examined him as to his doctrine and his disciples. Jesus, with just pride, declined to enter into long explanations. He referred Hanan to his teachings, which had been public; he declared that he had never held any secret doctrine; and he asked the ex-high priest to question those who had listened to him. This response was perfectly natural; but the exaggerated respect with which the old priest was surrounded made it seem audacious, and one of the bystanders is said to have replied to it by a blow.

Peter and John had followed their Master to the abode of Hanan. John, who was known in the house, was admitted without difficulty; but Peter was stopped at the entrance, and John had to beg the porter to let him pass

<sup>975</sup> Jerusalem Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 14: 16; Babylonian Talmud, *ibid.* 43 a, 67 a (comp. *Schabbath*, 104 b).

<sup>976</sup> Matt. 27: 63; John 7: 12, 47. The Greek verb is *πλανᾶν* "to lead astray" (as a false guide).

<sup>977</sup> John 18: 13, 24. This circumstance, found only in the fourth Gospel, is a strong proof of its historical value.

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through. The night was cold. Peter remained in the ante-chamber, and approached a brasier, round which the servants were warming themselves. He was quickly recognised as a disciple of the accused. The unfortunate man, betrayed by his Galilean accent, and pestered with questions by the servants, one of whom, a kinsman of Malchus, had seen him at Gethsemane, thrice denied that he had ever had anything to do with Jesus. He thought that Jesus could not hear him, and never imagined that this dissimulated cowardice was exceedingly dishonourable. But his better nature soon revealed to him the sin he had committed. A fortuitous circumstance, the crowing of the cock, recalled to him a remark that Jesus had made. Touched to the heart, he went out and wept bitterly.<sup>978</sup>

Hanan, although the real author of the judicial murder about to be done, had no power to pronounce sentence on Jesus; he sent him to his son-in-law, Kaïapha, who bore the official title. This man, the blind instrument of his father-in-law, naturally had to ratify all that had been done. The Sanhedrim was assembled at his house.<sup>979</sup> The inquiry began; and several witnesses, prepared beforehand in accordance with the inquisitorial process described in the Talmud, appeared before the tribunal. The fatal words which Jesus had actually uttered: "I am able to destroy the Temple of God and to build it in three days" (Matt. 26: 61), were reported by two witnesses. To blaspheme the Temple of God was, in Jewish law, to blaspheme God himself.<sup>980</sup> Jesus remained silent, and declined to explain the incriminating speech. If one version is to be believed, the high priest then adjured him to say if he were the Messiah;

<sup>978</sup> Matt. 26: 69-75; Mark 14: 66-72; Luke 22: 55-62; John 18: 15-18, 25-27.

<sup>979</sup> Matt. 26: 57; Mark 4: 53; Luke 22: 66.

<sup>980</sup> Matt. 23: 16-22.

Jesus avowed it, and even proclaimed before the assembly the near approach of his heavenly reign.<sup>981</sup> The courage of Jesus in his resolve to die renders this statement superfluous. It is more probable that here, as when before Hanan, he kept silence. This was his general rule of conduct during his last hours. The sentence was already decided, and they only sought for pretexts. Jesus felt this, and did not attempt a useless defence. From the point of view of orthodox Judaism, he truly was a blasphemer, a destroyer of the established worship; and these crimes were punished by the law with death.<sup>982</sup> With one voice, the assembly declared him guilty of a capital crime. The members of the council who secretly leaned to him were absent or refrained from voting.<sup>983</sup> The frivolity characteristic of long-established aristocracy did not permit the judges to reflect much on the consequences of the sentence they had passed. Human life was at that time very lightly sacrificed; doubtless the members of the Sanhedrim did not dream that their sons would have to render account to an enraged posterity for the condemnation delivered with such careless disdain.

The Sanhedrim had not the right to carry out a sentence of death.<sup>984</sup> But in the confusion of powers which then reigned in Judæa, Jesus was none the less condemned from that moment. He remained for the rest of the night exposed to the ill-treatment of an infamous pack of servants, who spared him no indignity.<sup>985</sup>

In the morning the chief priests and the elders met once

<sup>981</sup> Matt. 26: 64; Mark 14: 62; Luke 22: 69. The fourth Gospel speaks of no such incident.

<sup>982</sup> Levit. 24: 14-16; Deut. 13: 1-5.

<sup>983</sup> Luke 23: 50, 51.

<sup>984</sup> John 18: 31; Josephus, *Antiq.*, 20, 9: 1; Jerusalem Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 1: 4.

<sup>985</sup> Matt. 26: 67, 68; Mark 14: 65; Luke 22: 63-65.

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more.<sup>986</sup> The point was to get Pilate to ratify the sentence pronounced by the Sanhedrim, which, since the Roman occupation, was no longer sufficient. The procurator was not invested, like the imperial legate, with the disposal of life and death. But Jesus was not a Roman citizen; the governor's authorisation sufficed for the sentence passed on him being allowed to take its course. As always happens, when a political people subdues a nation in which the civil and the religious law are confounded, the Romans had been induced to lend the Jewish law a kind of official support. The Roman law did not apply to Jews. The latter remained under the canonical law which we find recorded in the Talmud, just as the Arabs in Algeria are still governed by the code of Islam. Thus, although neutral in religion, the Romans very often sanctioned penalties inflicted for religious offences. The situation was almost like that of the holy cities of India under English rule, or rather that which would be the state of Damascus, were Syria conquered by a European nation. Josephus asserts, though his statement may certainly be doubted, that if a Roman trespassed beyond the pillars which bore inscriptions forbidding pagans to go further, the Romans themselves would have delivered him over to the Jews to be put to death.<sup>987</sup>

The agents of the priests therefore bound Jesus and led him to the Prætorium, which had once been the palace of Herod,<sup>988</sup> near the Tower of Antonia.<sup>989</sup> It was the morning of the day on which the Paschal lamb had to be eaten (Friday, the 14th of Nisan, our 3rd of April). The Jews would have been defiled by entering the judgment-hall, and would have been unable to share in the sacred feast. They

<sup>986</sup> Matt. 27: 1; Mark 15: 1; Luke 22: 66, and 23: 1; John 18: 28.

<sup>987</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 15, 9: 5; *Wars*, 6, 2: 4.

<sup>988</sup> Philo, *Legatio ad Caium*, 38; Josephus, *Wars*, 2, 14: 8.

<sup>989</sup> Where now is the palace of the governor of Jerusalem.



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accordingly remained outside.<sup>990</sup> Pilate, being informed of their presence, ascended the bema,<sup>991</sup> or tribunal, situated in the open air,<sup>992</sup> at the place called *Gabbatha*, or in Greek, *Λιθόστρωτον* (pavement) on account of the pavement which covered the ground.

He had scarcely been informed of the accusation before he showed his annoyance at being mixed up in the matter.<sup>993</sup> He then shut himself up in the Prætorium with Jesus. There a conversation took place, the precise details of which are lost, no witness having been able to report it to the disciples, but the tenor of which seems to have been well divined by the fourth evangelist. His narrative at least is in perfect accordance with what history tells us of the mutual position of the two interlocutors.

The procurator Pontius, surnamed Pilate, no doubt because of the *pilum*, or javelin of honour, with which he or one of his ancestors was decorated,<sup>994</sup> had not hitherto been in contact with the new sect. Indifferent to the internal quarrels of the Jews, he saw in all these sectarian movements nothing but the results of intemperate imaginations and disordered brains. In general he did not like the Jews, but the Jews detested him still more. They considered him hard, scornful, and passionate, and accused him of improbable crimes.<sup>995</sup> Jerusalem, as the centre of a great popular fermentation, was a very seditious city, and, for a foreigner, an insupportable place of abode. The enthusiasts asserted that the new procurator had a deliberate design

<sup>990</sup> John 14: 8; 18: 28.

<sup>991</sup> The Greek word *βῆμα* had been adopted in Syro-Chaldaic.

<sup>992</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 2, 9: 3; 14: 8. Matt. 27: 27. John 18: 33.

<sup>993</sup> John 18: 29.

<sup>994</sup> Virgil, *Æneid*, 12: 121; Martial, *Epig.* 1: 32, and 10: 48; Plutarch, *Rom.* 29; comp. the *hasta pura* as a military decoration (Orelli and Henzen, *Inscr. Lat.* 3574, 6852, etc). The form *Pilatus* is thus a designation like *Galeatus*, *Torquatus*, etc.

<sup>995</sup> Philo, *Leg. ad Caium*, 38.



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of abolishing the Jewish law.<sup>996</sup> Their narrow fanaticism and their religious hatred disgusted that wide feeling of justice and civil government which the most ordinary Roman citizen carried everywhere with him. All the acts of Pilate known to us exhibit him as a good administrator.<sup>997</sup> At an early period of the exercise of his office he had had difficulties with those under his sway, which he had solved in a very brutal manner; but it seems that essentially he was in the right. The Jews must have appeared to him to be a people behind the age; probably he judged them as a liberal prefect formerly judged the Bas-Bretons, who rebelled because of a new road, or the establishment of a school. In his best projects for the welfare of the country, notably in all relating to public works, he had encountered an impassable obstacle in the Law. The Law restricted life to such a point that it obstructed all change and all improvements. The Roman structures, even those most useful, were objects of great antipathy to zealous Jews.<sup>998</sup> Two votive escutcheons with inscriptions, which Pilate had placed on his residence near the sacred precincts, provoked a still more violent outburst.<sup>999</sup> At first he paid little attention to these susceptibilities; and he was soon involved in sanguinary suppressions of revolt,<sup>1000</sup> which later ended in his removal.<sup>1001</sup> Experience of so many conflicts had rendered him very prudent in his relations with an intractable people, which avenged itself upon its masters by compelling them to use towards it hateful severities. With extreme displeasure the procurator saw himself led to play a cruel part in this new affair, for the sake of a law which

<sup>996</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 3: 1.

<sup>997</sup> Ibid. 3, 4.

<sup>998</sup> Babylonian Talmud, *Schabbath*, 33 b.

<sup>999</sup> Philo, *Leg. ad Caium*, 38.

<sup>1000</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 3: 1, 2; *Wars*, 2, 9: 2, 3. Luke 13: 1.

<sup>1001</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 4: 1, 2.

he detested.<sup>1002</sup> He knew that religious fanaticism, when it has obtained the sanction of civil governments to some act of violence, is afterwards the first to throw the responsibility upon them, and almost accuses them of bringing it about. Supreme injustice, for the true culprit in such cases is the instigator!

Pilate then would have liked to save Jesus. Perhaps the dignified and calm attitude of the accused made an impression upon him. According to one tradition, of little authenticity indeed,<sup>1003</sup> Jesus found a supporter in the wife of the procurator himself, who asserted that she had had a painful dream about him. She may have seen the gentle Galilean from one of the palace windows overlooking the courts of the Temple. Perhaps she saw him again in her dreams; and the idea that the blood of this fine-looking young man was about to be spilt caused a nightmare. It is certain at least that Jesus found Pilate prepossessed in his favour. The governor questioned him kindly, and with the intention of finding some means of sending him away acquitted.

The title of "King of the Jews," which Jesus had never assumed, but which his enemies represented as the sum and substance of his line of actions and pretensions, was naturally that by which it was most possible to excite the suspicions of the Roman authorities. He was accordingly charged on this plea of sedition and treason against the government. Nothing could be more unjust; for Jesus had always recognised the Roman government as the established power. But conservative religious parties are not accustomed to shrink from calumny. In spite of his own explanation, they drew all kinds of conclusions from his teaching; they transformed him into a disciple of Judas the Gaulonite; they asserted that he forbade the payment

<sup>1002</sup> John 18: 35.

<sup>1003</sup> Matt. 27: 19.

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of tribute to Cæsar.<sup>1004</sup> Pilate asked him if he were really the King of the Jews.<sup>1005</sup> Jesus concealed none of his thoughts. But the great ambiguity of speech which had been the source of his strength, and was destined after his death to establish his kingship, was in this matter his ruin. As an idealist, that is to say, as one who did not distinguish spirit from substance, Jesus, whose words, to use the image of the Apocalypse, were as a two-edged sword, never completely satisfied earthly powers. If we are to believe the fourth Gospel, he avowed his kingship, but uttered at the same time the profound saying: "My kingdom is not of this world" (Matt. 27:19). Then he explained the nature of his kingship, declaring that it consisted entirely in the possession and the proclamation of truth. Pilate understood nothing of this lofty idealism.<sup>1006</sup> No doubt Jesus impressed him as being a harmless dreamer. The total absence of religious and philosophical proselytism among the Romans of the period made them regard devotion to truth as a chimera. Such discussions bored them and appeared meaningless. Not perceiving the leaven of peril to the Empire that lay hidden in these new speculations, they had no motive for employing violence against them. All their displeasure fell upon those who asked them to inflict punishments for what seemed to them vain subtleties. Twenty years later, Gallio still adopted the same course towards the Jews.<sup>1007</sup> Until the fall of Jerusalem, the practice followed by the Romans in their administration was to remain completely neutral in sectarian quarrels.<sup>1008</sup>

<sup>1004</sup> Luke 23: 2, 5.

<sup>1005</sup> Matt. 27: 11; Mark 15: 2; Luke 23: 3; John 18: 33.

<sup>1006</sup> John 18: 28.

<sup>1007</sup> Acts 18: 14, 15.

<sup>1008</sup> Tacitus (Ann. 15: 44) speaks of the death of Jesus as a political act of Pilate. But when Tacitus wrote, the Roman policy towards

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An expedient suggested itself to the governor's mind, by which he could reconcile his own feelings with the demands of the fanatical people, whose pressure he had felt so often already. It was customary to deliver up a prisoner to the people at the time of the Passover. Pilate, aware that Jesus had been arrested only because of the jealousy of the priests,<sup>1009</sup> endeavoured to make him benefit by this custom. He again appeared on the *bema*, and proposed to the multitude to release the "King of the Jews." The proposition made in these terms was characterised by a certain liberality, as well as being ironical. The priests saw its danger. They acted promptly,<sup>1010</sup> and, to combat Pilate's proposal, they suggested to the crowd the name of a prisoner who enjoyed great popularity in Jerusalem. By a singular coincidence, he too was called Jesus,<sup>1011</sup> and bore the surname of Bar-Abba, or Bar-Rabban.<sup>1012</sup> He was a well-known character,<sup>1013</sup> and had been arrested for taking part in a riot in which murder had been done.<sup>1014</sup> A general clamour arose, "Not this man, but Jesus Bar-Rabban;" and Pilate was obliged to release Jesus Bar-Rabban.

His embarrassment increased. He feared that too much indulgence shown to a prisoner, to whom was given the title of "King of the Jews," might compromise himself. Fanaticism, moreover, compels all powers to make terms with it. Pilate thought himself forced to make some concession;

Christians had changed: they were held guilty of secret conspiracy against the state. The historian naturally thought that Pilate, in putting Jesus to death, was governed by reasons of public safety. Josephus is more correct (*Antiq.*, 18, 3: 3).

<sup>1009</sup> Mark 15: 10.

<sup>1010</sup> Matt. 27: 20; Mark 15: 11.

<sup>1011</sup> The name "Jesus" has disappeared in most manuscripts, but the reading has strong authority in its favour.

<sup>1012</sup> Matt. 27: 16; Gospel of Hebrews (Hilgenfeld, 17, 28).

<sup>1013</sup> Compare Jerome on Matt. 27: 16.

<sup>1014</sup> Mark 15: 7; Luke 23: 19. The fourth Gospel, which makes him a "robber," seems less well-informed than Mark.

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but, still hesitating to shed blood to satisfy people whom he hated, he tried to turn the matter into a farce. Affecting to laugh at the pompous title that had been given to Jesus, he caused him to be scourged.<sup>1015</sup> Scourging was the usual preliminary of crucifixion.<sup>1016</sup> Perhaps Pilate wished it to be believed that this sentence had already been pronounced, and hoped that the preliminary punishment would suffice. Then took place—according to all the narratives—a revolting scene. The soldiers put a scarlet robe on the back of Jesus, a crown made of thorn branches upon his head, and a reed in his hand. Thus attired he was led to the tribunal in front of the people. The soldiers defiled before him, striking him in turn, and knelt to him, saying, “Hail! King of the Jews.”<sup>1017</sup> Others, it is said, spat upon him, and struck him on the head with the reed. It is difficult to understand how Roman dignity could have stooped to acts so shameful. It is true that Pilate, in his position as procurator, had scarcely any but auxiliary troops under his command.<sup>1018</sup> Roman citizens, as the legionaries were, would not have descended to such behaviour.

Did Pilate believe that by this display he shielded himself from responsibility? Did he hope to turn aside the blow which menaced Jesus by conceding something to the hatred of the Jews,<sup>1019</sup> and by substituting a grotesque termination for the tragic consummation, to make it appear that the matter merited no other issue? If such were his plan it was unsuccessful. The tumult increased, and became an actual riot. The cry, “Crucify him! Crucify!”

<sup>1015</sup> Matt. 27: 26; Mark 15: 15; John 19: 1.

<sup>1016</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 2, 14: 9; 5, 11: 1; 7, 6: 4. Livy, 33: 36. Quintus Curtius, 7, 11: 28.

<sup>1017</sup> Matt. 27: 27–30; Mark 15: 16–19; Luke 23: 11; John 19: 2, 3.

<sup>1018</sup> See Renier, *Insc. rom. de l'Algerie*, 5 frag, B. Foreign spies and executioners in the army do not appear till later; but see Cicero, *In Verrem*, Act 2, in numerous passages; *Epist. ad Q. Frat.* 1: 1, 4.

<sup>1019</sup> Luke 23: 16, 22.

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resounded from every side. The priests, adopting a more and more exacting tone, declared the Law would be imperilled if the corrupter were not punished with death.<sup>1020</sup> Pilate saw plainly that to save Jesus it would be necessary to put down a sanguinary outbreak. He still tried, however, to gain time. He returned to the Prætorium, and ascertained from what country Jesus came in the hope of finding some pretext for asserting the matter to be out of his jurisdiction. According to one tradition, he even sent Jesus to Antipas, who, it is said, was then at Jerusalem.<sup>1021</sup> Jesus took no part in these well-meant efforts; he kept, as he had done before Kaiapha, a grave and dignified silence which astonished Pilate. The cries from without became more and more threatening. The people had already begun to denounce the lack of zeal in a functionary who protected an enemy of Cæsar. The greatest foes of the Roman rule were suddenly transformed into loyal subjects of Tiberius, that they might have the right of accusing the over-tolerant procurator of high treason. "We have no king," cried they, "but Cæsar. If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend: every one that maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar."<sup>1022</sup> The feeble Pilate surrendered; he foresaw the report that his enemies would

<sup>1020</sup> John 19: 7.

<sup>1021</sup> John 19: 9; comp. Luke 23: 6-12. This may be a first attempt to "harmonize" the Gospels, Luke having had in his hand an account in which the death of Jesus was wrongly laid to Herod, and, not to lose this point entirely, pieced the two accounts together,—the rather, because he vaguely knew that (as the fourth Gospel gives it) Jesus appeared before three tribunals. In sundry other cases, Luke seems to have a distant notion of facts peculiar to John's narration. Further, the third Gospel includes in the story of the crucifixion a number of additions which the author seems to have found in a later account, evidently compiled with a view to edification.

<sup>1022</sup> John 19: 12, 15; comp. Luke 23: 2. How accurately the colouring of this scene is given by the evangelists, may be seen in Philo, *Legatio ad Caium*, 38.



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send to Rome, in which he would be accused of having protected a rival of Tiberius. Once before, in the question of the votive escutcheons,<sup>1023</sup> the Jews had written to the Emperor, and had received satisfaction. He feared for his office. By a compliance, which was to deliver his name to the scourge of history, he yielded, throwing upon the Jews, it is said, the whole responsibility for what was about to take place. The latter, according to the Christians, fully accepted it, by shouting, "His blood be on us and on our children!"<sup>1024</sup>

Were these words really uttered? It may be doubted. But they express a profound historical truth. Considering the attitude which the Romans had taken in Judæa, it was scarcely possible for Pilate to have acted otherwise than as he did. How many death sentences, dictated by religious intolerance, have forced the hand of the civil power! The King of Spain, who, to please a fanatical clergy, delivered hundreds of his subjects to the stake, was more open to reproach than Pilate, for he represented a more absolute power than that of the Romans in Jerusalem about the year 33. When the civil power begins to persecute or meddle at the solicitation of the priesthood, it proves its weakness. But let the government that in this respect is without sin cast the first stone at Pilate. The "secular arm," behind which clerical cruelty shields itself, is not the culprit. None has a right to say that he has a horror of blood when he causes it to be shed by his servants.

It was then neither Tiberius nor Pilate who condemned Jesus. It was the old Jewish party; it was the Mosaic Law. According to our modern ideas, there is no transmission of moral demerit from father to son; none is accountable to human or divine justice save for what himself has done. Consequently, every Jew who suffers to this day for the

<sup>1023</sup> See *ante*, p. 377.

<sup>1024</sup> Matt. 27: 24, 25.

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murder of Jesus has a right to complain, for he might have been like Simon the Cyrenean; at any rate, he might not have been among those who cried "Crucify him!" But nations, like individuals, have their responsibilities, and if ever a crime was a national crime, it was the death of Jesus. His death was "legal" in the sense that it was primarily caused by a law that was the very soul of the nation. The Mosaic Law, in its modern but still in its accepted form assigned the penalty of death to all attempts to change the established worship. Now, there can be no doubt that Jesus attacked this worship, and aspired to destroy it. The Jews expressed this to Pilate, with truthful simplicity: "We have a law, and by that law he ought to die; because he has made himself the son of God" (John 19:7). The law was detestable, but it was the law of ancient ferocity; and the hero, who came forward to abrogate it, had first of all to suffer its penalty.

Alas! more than eighteen hundred years have been necessary for the blood that he shed to bear its fruits. Tortures and death were for ages destined to be inflicted in the name of Jesus, on thinkers as noble as himself. Even now in countries which call themselves Christian, penalties are imposed for religious offences. Jesus is not responsible for these errors. He could not foresee that one day people, with depraved imaginations, would think of him as a frightful Moloch, greedy of burnt flesh. Christianity has been intolerant, but there is nothing essentially Christian in intolerance. It is a Jewish characteristic, in the sense that it was Judaism which first affirmed the theory of absolutism in religion, and laid down the principle that every reformer turning men away from the true faith, even if he bring miracles to support his doctrine, must be stoned without trial.<sup>1025</sup> Certainly the pagan nations also

<sup>1025</sup> Deut. 13: 1-11.

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had their religious violences. But if they had had this law, how would they have become Christian? The Pentateuch has thus been the first code of religious terrorism in the world. Judaism has given the example of an immutable dogma armed with the sword. If, in place of pursuing the Jews with a blind hatred, Christianity had abolished the *régime* which caused the death of its founder, how much more consistent would it have been—how much better it would have deserved of the human race!

## CHAPTER XXV

### *The Death of Jesus*

Although the real motive for the death of Jesus was entirely a religious one, his enemies had, in the judgment hall, succeeded in representing him as being guilty of treason against the state; they would not have obtained from the sceptical Pilate a condemnation simply on the ground of heterodoxy. Following up the idea, the priests demanded, through the people, the crucifixion of Jesus. This punishment was not Jewish in its origin; had the condemnation of Jesus been purely Mosaic, he would have been stoned to death.<sup>1026</sup> Crucifixion was a Roman punishment, reserved for slaves, and for cases in which it was desired to aggravate death by making it ignominious. By inflicting it on Jesus, they treated him as they treated highway robbers, brigands, bandits, or those enemies of humble rank to whom the Romans did not grant the honour of death by the sword.<sup>1027</sup> It was the chimerical "King of the Jews," not the heterodox dogmatist, who was punished. Consistently with the same idea, the execution was left to the Romans. At this epoch, amongst the Romans, the soldiers, at least in the case of political condemnations,<sup>1028</sup> performed the duties of executioners. Jesus was therefore delivered to a cohort

<sup>1026</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 20, 9: 1. The Talmud, representing his condemnation to be wholly on religious grounds, asserts that he was really condemned to be stoned, but goes on to say that he was hanged,—meaning, perhaps that he was hanged after being stoned, as was sometimes done (Mishna, *Sanhedrin*, 6: 4; comp. Deut. 21: 22). Jerusalem Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 14: 16; Babylonian Talmud, *ibid.* 43 a, 67 c.

<sup>1027</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 17, 10: 10, and 20, 6: 2; *Wars*, 5, 11: 1. Apuleius, *Metam.* 3: 9. Suet. *Galba*, 9. Lampridas, *Alex. Severus*, 23.

<sup>1028</sup> Tacitus, *Ann.* 3: 14 (see p. 381, note 2).

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of auxiliary troops,<sup>1029</sup> and all the most hateful characteristics of executions introduced by the cruel customs of the new conquerors were used in his case. It was about noon.<sup>1030</sup> They re-clothed him with the garments which they had removed for the scene at the tribunal, and as the cohort already had in reserve two thieves who were to be executed, the three condemned men were put together, and the procession set out for the scene of the execution.

This was at a place called Golgotha, situated outside Jerusalem, but near the walls of the city.<sup>1031</sup> The name *Golgotha* signifies a *skull*; it apparently corresponds with the French word *Chaumont*, and probably designated a bare hill or rising ground having the form of a bald skull. The situation of the hill is not precisely known. It was certainly on the north or north-west of the city, in the high irregular plain which extends between the walls and the two valleys of Kedron and Hinnom,<sup>1032</sup> a rather commonplace region, made still more dismal by the objectionable circumstances usual in the neighbourhood of a great city. There is no reason for identifying Golgotha with the place which, since the time of Constantine, has been venerated by all Christendom.<sup>1033</sup> But, at the same time, there is no

<sup>1029</sup> Matt. 27: 54; Mark 15: 39, 44, 45; Luke 23: 47.

<sup>1030</sup> John 19: 14. According to Mark (15: 25), it could hardly have been later than eight, since he was crucified at nine ("the third hour").

<sup>1031</sup> Matt. 27: 33; Mark 15: 22; John 19: 20; Heb. 13: 12; comp. Plautus, *Miles Gloriosus*, 2, 4: 6, 7.

<sup>1032</sup> Golgotha seems to have some relation with the hill Gareb and the spot called Goath (Jer. 31: 39), which were apparently on the north-west of the city. We may conjecturally fix the place near the extreme angle made by the present wall towards the west, or else on one of the hillsides looking down upon the valley of Hinnom, above *Birket Mamilla* (near which is "Gordon's Calvary"; see Pierre Loti's *Jerusalem*, p. 102). Or we might have in mind the eminence overlooking "Jeremiah's Grotto."

<sup>1033</sup> The arguments which aim to show that the Holy Sepulchre has been removed since Constantine are without weight.

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such overwhelming objection to this theory as to make it necessary to criticise Christian traditions on the matter.<sup>1034</sup>

Any one who was condemned to the cross had himself to carry the instrument of his execution.<sup>1035</sup> But Jesus, being physically weaker than his two companions, could not carry his. The troop met a certain Simon of Cyrene, who was returning from the country, and the soldiers, in the rough

<sup>1034</sup> The question turns on whether the place now known as Golgotha (which is well within the present limits of the city) was at the time of Jesus outside the walls. About eighty yards to the east of the traditional location of Calvary, there has been found the face of a Jewish wall like that of Hebron; and this, if it belonged to the city wall of that date, would leave the site referred to quite outside the town (Vogüé, *Le Temple*, etc., p. 117). A burial-cavern (called "tomb of Joseph of Arimathea"), under the wall of the cupola of the "Holy Sepulchre," seems to show that at some period this spot was outside the walls (see, however, Mishna, *Parah*, 3: 2; *Baba kama*, 7 end); but this cavern does not seem old enough (see Vogüé, p. 115) to allow us to suppose it earlier than the line of wall existing in the time of Jesus. Two historical considerations, one of them having some weight, may further be called to the support of the traditional view: 1. First, it would be strange if those who, under Constantine, sought to fix the gospel topography, had not been checked by the objection found in John 19: 20 ("nigh the city") and Heb. 13: 12 ("without the gate"). How, left free in their choice, should they have lightly incurred so grave a difficulty? We are thus led to think that these devout topographers had some solid ground; that they sought for proofs, and, though not wholly on their guard against pious frauds, they were guided by real tokens: if they had followed a mere vain caprice, they would have fixed Golgotha upon some more evident spot,—the top of some one of the round hillocks near Jerusalem, yielding thus to the Christian fancy, which would have it that the death of the Christ took place upon a mountain. 2. The second consideration favouring the tradition is, that at the time of Constantine a temple of Venus built (it is said) by Hadrian upon Golgotha—or least the memory of this temple—might serve as a guide. This, however, is far from proof. Eusebius (*Vita Const.* 3: 26), Socrates (*H. E.* 1: 17), Sozomen (*H. E.* 2: 1), and Jerome (*Ep.* 49, *ad Paulinum*) say, it is true, that there was a shrine of Venus on the spot which they identify with the Holy Sepulchre; but it is not certain (1) that it was built by Hadrian; (2) that it was built on a spot called at that day Golgotha; or (3) that he had the intention of building it at the place where Jesus suffered death.

<sup>1035</sup> Plutarch, *De sera Numinis vindicta*, 19; Artemidorus, *Oniroticrit*, 2: 56.



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fashion of foreign garrisons, forced him to bear the fatal tree. Perhaps they made use of a recognised right to compel labour, the Romans not being allowed to carry the infamous wood themselves. It appears that Simon was afterwards of the Christian community. His two sons, Alexander and Rufus,<sup>1036</sup> were well known in it. He related perhaps more than one circumstance which he had witnessed. No disciple was at this moment near Jesus.<sup>1037</sup>

At last the place of execution was reached. According to Jewish custom, the sufferers were offered a strong aromatic wine, an intoxicating beverage which, by a feeling of pity, was given to the condemned to stupefy them.<sup>1038</sup> It appears that the ladies of Jerusalem frequently brought this death wine to the unfortunates who were led to execution; and when none of them attended, it was purchased by the public treasury.<sup>1039</sup> Jesus, after having touched the edge of the cup with his lips, refused to drink.<sup>1040</sup> This sad consolation of ordinary sufferers did not accord with his exalted nature. He preferred to go from life with perfect clarity of mind, and in full consciousness to await the death he had willed and called down upon himself. He was then stripped of his garments and fastened to the cross.<sup>1041</sup> The cross was composed of two beams, tied in

<sup>1036</sup> Mark 15: 21.

<sup>1037</sup> The circumstance told in Luke 23: 27-31 is one of those in which we note the effect of pious and tender tradition. The words here ascribed to Jesus ("Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me," etc.) could not have been regarded as his till after the siege of Jerusalem.

<sup>1038</sup> Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 3 a; Nicolas de Lire, *In Matt.* 27: 34; comp. Prov. 31: 6.

<sup>1039</sup> Babylonian Talmud, *ibid.*

<sup>1040</sup> Mark 15: 23 ("wine mingled with myrrh"), contradicted by Matt. 27: 34, where the "vinegar and gall" are a messianic allusion to Psalm 69: 22.

<sup>1041</sup> Matt. 27: 35; Mark 15: 24; John 19: 23 (comp. Artemidorus, *Onirocritica*, 2: 53).

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the form of the letter T.<sup>1042</sup> It was not very high, for the feet of the sufferer almost touched the earth.<sup>1043</sup> They commenced by fixing it,<sup>1044</sup> then they fastened the victim to it by driving nails into his hands; the feet were often nailed, though sometimes only bound with cords.<sup>1045</sup> A piece of wood like a ship's yard was fastened to the upright portion of the cross, towards the middle, and passed between the legs of the condemned, who rested upon it.<sup>1046</sup> Without this, the hands would have been torn and the body have sunk down.<sup>1047</sup> At other times a small horizontal rest was fixed beneath the feet, and held them up.<sup>1048</sup>

Jesus tasted these horrors in all their atrocity. The two robbers were crucified on either side of him. The executioners, to whom were usually left the small effects (*pannicularia*) of executed felons,<sup>1049</sup> drew lots for his garments,<sup>1050</sup> and sitting at the foot of the cross, kept watch over him.<sup>1051</sup> According to one tradition, Jesus uttered this

<sup>1042</sup> Epistle of Barnabas, 9; Lucian, *Jud. voc.* 12: compare the grotesque form of cross scrawled at Rome on a wall of Mt. Palatine (Garrucci: *Il crocifisso graffito in casa dei Cesari*, Roma, 1857).

<sup>1043</sup> As we see from the "hyssop" of John 19: 29: with a sprig of hyssop one cannot reach very high. (True, this may be an allusion to Exod. 12: 22.)

<sup>1044</sup> Josephus, *Wars*, 7, 6: 4; Cicero, *In Verr.* 5: 66; Xenophon of Ephesus, *Ephesiaca*, 4: 2.

<sup>1045</sup> Luke 24: 39; John 20: 25-27; Plautus, *Most.*, 2, 1: 13; Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 7: 543-547; Justin, *Tryph.*, 97; *Apol.*, 1: 35; Tertullian, *Adv. Marcionem*, 3: 19.

<sup>1046</sup> Irenæus, *Adv. hæc.* 2, 24: 4; Justin, *Tryph.*, 91.

<sup>1047</sup> See story by an eyewitness of a crucifixion in China: *Revue germanique et française*, Aug., 1864, p. 358.

<sup>1048</sup> See the *graffito* before cited, and monuments in Martigny, *Dict. des antiq. chr.* 193; also Gregory of Tours, *De gloria mart.* 1: 6.

<sup>1049</sup> Digest, 47: 20, *De bonis damnatorum*, 6. The custom was checked by Hadrian.

<sup>1050</sup> Matt. 27: 35; Mark 15: 24; Luke 23: 34. The circumstance [of the coat "without seam"] added in John 19: 23, 24, seems to be a fancy: see Josephus, *Antiq.*, 3, 7: 4.

<sup>1051</sup> Matt. 26: 36; comp. Petronius, *Satyr.*, 111, 112.

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saying, which was in his heart if not upon his lips: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."<sup>1052</sup>

According to Roman custom, an inscription was attached to the top of the cross,<sup>1053</sup> bearing, in three languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, the words: "THE KING OF THE JEWS." There was something painful and insulting to the nation in this inscription. The numerous passers-by who read it were offended. The priests complained to Pilate that an inscription which would have simply implied that Jesus had called himself king of the Jews should have been used. But Pilate, already tired of the whole affair, declined to make any change in what had been written.<sup>1054</sup>

The disciples had fled. Nevertheless a tradition<sup>1055</sup> relates that John remained standing at the foot of the cross during the whole time.<sup>1056</sup> It may be affirmed, with more certainty, that the faithful women friends of Galilee, who had followed Jesus to Jerusalem and continued to tend him, did not abandon him. Mary Cleophas, Mary Magdalen, Joanna wife of Khouza, Salome, and others stayed at a certain distance,<sup>1057</sup> and did not take their eyes from

<sup>1052</sup> Luke 23: 34. In general, the last words ascribed to Jesus, especially in Luke, suggest a desire either of edification or the fulfilment of prophecy. In such cases, each one hears as he feels; and the last words of celebrated men are always variously reported by the nearest witnesses,—as in the case of the Bâb (Gobineau, *Les religions et les philosophies de l'Asie centrale*, 268).

<sup>1053</sup> This was probably carried before Jesus on the way to Calvary. See Sueton., *Calig.* 32; Euseb. *Hist.* 5, 1: 19 (Letter of churches of Vienne and Lyons).

<sup>1054</sup> Matt. 27: 37; Mark 15: 26; Luke 23: 38; John 19: 19-22. Perhaps there was a scruple of legality: Apuleius, *Florida*, 1: 9.

<sup>1055</sup> Justin, *Tryph.*, 106.

<sup>1056</sup> John 19: 25-27.

<sup>1057</sup> The Synoptics all put the faithful group "far" from the cross; the fourth Gospel says "beside" (*παρά*) to indicate that John himself was very near.

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him.<sup>1058</sup> If the fourth Gospel is to be believed,<sup>1059</sup> Mary, the mother of Jesus, was also at the foot of the cross, and Jesus, seeing his mother and his beloved disciple together, said to the one, "Behold thy mother!" and to the other, "Behold thy son!"<sup>1060</sup> But we do not understand how the synoptic evangelists, who name the other women, should have omitted her whose presence was so striking a feature. Perhaps indeed the extreme loftiness of the character of Jesus does not render such personal emotion probable at the moment when, solely possessed with thoughts of his work, he no longer existed save for humanity.

Apart from this little group of women, the sight of whom afar off consoled him, Jesus had before him only a spectacle of human baseness or stupidity. The passers-by insulted him. Round about him he heard foolish raillery, his supreme cries of agony were turned into hateful jests: "He trusteth on God; let him deliver him now, if he desireth him: for he said, I am the Son of God." "He

<sup>1058</sup> Matt. 27: 55, 56; Mark 15: 40, 41; Luke 23: 49, 55, and 24, 10; John 19: 25; comp. Luke 23: 27-31.

<sup>1059</sup> John 19: 25-27. Luke, who is always on middle ground between the other two Gospels and the fourth, introduces "all his acquaintance" (23: 49), but "afar off." The expression (*γνωστοι*) may, it is true, include the "kindred;" but Luke (2: 44) distinguishes between "kinsfolk" (*συγγενεῖς*) and "acquaintance" (*γνωστοί*). Further, the best manuscripts read *οἱ γνωστοὶ αὐτῷ* ("known to him"), not *οἱ γνωστοὶ αὐτοῦ* ("his acquaintance"). Mary the mother of Jesus is by Luke (in Acts 1: 14) put in company with the Galilean women; elsewhere (Luke 2: 35) he says that a sword will pierce her heart. But this is far from explaining why he omits her at the cross.

<sup>1060</sup> John seems, in fact, after the death of Jesus, to have taken home the mother of his master, and to have, as it were, adopted her (John 19: 27). The great honour in which she was held by the infant church very probably led the disciples of John to maintain that Jesus, whose favourite disciple their master had been, had in dying commended to him that which he held most dear. The presence with him, whether real or supposed, of this precious charge gave him a certain eminence among the Apostles, and secured high authority to the doctrine of which he was made the sponsor.

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saved others," they said again; "himself he cannot save. He is the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe on him! Thou that destroyest the Temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself."<sup>1061</sup> Some who had a vague acquaintance with his apocalyptic ideas thought they heard him call upon Elias, and said, "Let us see whether Elijah cometh to save him." It would seem that the two crucified thieves at his side also insulted him.<sup>1062</sup> The sky was dark;<sup>1063</sup> and the surrounding country, as throughout the environs of Jerusalem, barren and dismal. For a moment, according to certain narratives, his heart failed him; a cloud hid from him the face of his Father; he endured an agony of despair more acute a thousand times than all his torments. He saw nothing but the ingratitude of men; he perhaps repented his suffering for a vile race, and he cried: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But his divine instinct again sustained him. In measure as the life of the body flickered out, his soul grew serene, and by degrees returned to its heavenly source. He regained the idea of his mission; in his death he saw the salvation of the world; the hideous spectacle spread at his feet, melted from his sight, and, profoundly united to his Father, he began upon the gibbet the divine life which he was to live in the heart of humanity through infinite ages.

The peculiar atrocity of crucifixion was that in this horrible condition it was possible to live three or four days upon the instrument of torture.<sup>1064</sup> The hæmorrhage from

<sup>1061</sup> Matt. 27: 40-43; Mark 15: 29-32.

<sup>1062</sup> Matt. 27: 44; Mark 15: 32. Luke modifies the account, in harmony with his zeal for the conversion of sinners.

<sup>1063</sup> Matt. 27: 45; Mark 15: 33; Luke 23: 44.

<sup>1064</sup> Petronius, *Satyr.*, 111 *et seq.*; Origen, *Comm. in Matt.* ser. 140; Arabic text in Kosegarten. *Chrest. arab.* p. 63 *et seq.*; *Revue germ.*, ubi supra.

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the hands soon ceased and was not mortal. The real cause of death was the unnatural position of the body, which produced a fearful disturbance of the circulation, terrible pains in the head and heart, and, finally, paralysis of the limbs. Those who had a strong constitution could sleep and only died of hunger.<sup>1065</sup> The motive idea of this cruel punishment was not to kill the victim directly by positive injuries, but to expose the slave, nailed by the hands of which he had not known how to make good use, and to leave him to rot on the wood. The delicate organisation of Jesus preserved him from this slow agony. A burning thirst, one of the tortures of crucifixion, as of all punishments causing great loss of blood, devoured him, and he asked to drink.<sup>1066</sup> There was standing near a jar of the ordinary beverage of Roman soldiers, a mixture of vinegar and water called *posca*. The soldiers had to carry their *posca* with them on all their expeditions, in which executions were included.<sup>1067</sup> A soldier dipped a sponge<sup>1068</sup> in this liquor, put it on the end of a reed, and raised it to the lips of Jesus, who sucked it.<sup>1069</sup> There is a theory in the East that allowing crucified or empaled victims to drink accelerates death;<sup>1070</sup> many believed<sup>1071</sup> that Jesus rendered up his spirit directly he had drunk the vinegar. It is much more probable that an apoplectic stroke or the instantaneous rupture of a blood-vessel in the heart caused his sudden death at the end of three hours. Some moments

<sup>1065</sup> Eusebius, *Hist.* 8: 8; *Revue germ.* *ibid.*

<sup>1066</sup> See the Arabic text before referred to.

<sup>1067</sup> Spartian, *Vita Adriani*; Vulcatius Gallicanus, *Avidius Cassius*, 5.

<sup>1068</sup> Probably the small sponge which served as a stopper to the neck of the vessel containing the *posca*.

<sup>1069</sup> Matt. 27: 48; Mark 15: 36; Luke 23: 36; John 19: 28-30.

<sup>1070</sup> See Nicolas de Lire, *In Matt.* 27: 34, and John 19: 29; also the accounts of the execution of Kléber's assassin. Compare *Rev. germ.*, etc.

<sup>1071</sup> See Matt., Mark, and John.



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before giving up his soul his voice was still strong.<sup>1072</sup> Of a sudden he uttered a terrible cry, heard by some as: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!" (Luke 23: 46) but by others, more preoccupied with the accomplishment of prophecies, rendered in the words, "It is finished!" (John 19: 30.) His head fell upon his breast, and he expired.

Rest now in thy glory, noble pioneer! Thy work is achieved, thy divinity established. Fear no more to see the edifice of thine efforts crumble through a flaw. Henceforth, beyond the reach of frailty, thou shalt behold, from the heights of heavenly peace, the infinite consequences of thy deeds. At the price of a few hours of suffering, which have not even touched thy mighty soul, thou hast purchased the fullest immortality. For thousands of years the world will depend upon thee! Banner of our contradictions, thou shalt be the sign around which the fiercest battle shall be waged. A thousand times more alive, a thousand times more loved since thy death than during the days of thy pilgrimage here below, thou shalt become so truly the corner-stone of humanity, that to tear thy name from this world were to shake it to its foundations. Betwixt thee and God men shall distinguish no more. Thou that hast utterly vanquished death, take possession of thy kingdom, whither, by the royal road which thou hast shown, ages of worshippers shall follow thee.

<sup>1072</sup> Matt. 27: 46; Mark 15: 34.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### *Jesus in the Tomb*

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon, according to our manner of reckoning time, when Jesus expired.<sup>1073</sup> There was a Jewish law against a corpse being allowed to remain hanging on the cross after the evening of the day of execution.<sup>1074</sup> It is not probable that this rule was observed in executions carried out by the Romans, but as the next day was the Sabbath, and a Sabbath of peculiar solemnity, the Jews expressed to the Roman authorities<sup>1075</sup> their desire that the holy day should not be profaned by such a spectacle.<sup>1076</sup> Their request was granted; orders were given to hasten the death of the three victims, and to remove them from the cross. The soldiers obeyed these instructions by inflicting on the two thieves a second punishment much more speedy than that of the cross, the *crurifragium*, or breaking of the legs,<sup>1077</sup> the usual punishment for slaves and prisoners of war. As to Jesus, they found that he was dead, and did not think it necessary to break his legs.<sup>1078</sup> But one of them, to remove all doubt

<sup>1073</sup> Matt. 27: 46; Mark 15: 37; Luke 23: 44: comp. John 19: 14.

<sup>1074</sup> Deut. 21: 22, 23; Joshua 8: 29, and 10: 26, 27: comp. Josephus, *Wars*, 4, 5: 2; Mishna, *Sanhedrin*, 6: 5.

<sup>1075</sup> In the fourth Gospel "to Pilate;" but this cannot be, for Mark (15: 44, 45) states that "when the even was come" Pilate was still ignorant of the death of Jesus.

<sup>1076</sup> Comp. Philo, *In Flaccum*, 10.

<sup>1077</sup> There is no other example of *crurifragium* following crucifixion, though a "stroke of grace" was often given to shorten the suffering. See a passage translated from Ibn-Hischam in the *Zeitschr. für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, 1: 99, 100.

<sup>1078</sup> This is, possibly, an addition inserted to liken Jesus to the paschal lamb; Exodus 12: 46; Numbers 9: 12.

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as to the actual death of the third victim, and to complete it, if any breath remained in him, pierced his side with a spear.<sup>1079</sup> They thought they saw water and blood flow from the wound,<sup>1080</sup> which was regarded as a sign that life had ceased.

The fourth evangelist, who makes John an actual witness of the affair, insists strongly on this circumstance.<sup>1081</sup> It is evident indeed that doubts arose as to the reality of the death of Jesus. A few hours' suspension on the cross appeared to persons in the habit of seeing crucifixions quite insufficient to bring about such a result. They quoted many instances of crucified persons, who, having been removed in time, had been restored to life by powerful remedies.<sup>1082</sup> Origen, at a later date, thought it necessary to invoke miracle in order to explain so sudden an end.<sup>1083</sup> The same surprise is to be found in the narrative of Mark.<sup>1084</sup> In truth, the best guarantee possessed by the historian on a point of this nature is the suspicious hatred of the enemies of Jesus. It is doubtful whether the Jews were at that time filled with apprehension that Jesus might pass for resuscitated; but, in any case, they must have taken care that he was really dead. Whatever, at certain periods, may have been the negligence of the ancients in everything relating to legal proof and the strict conduct of affairs, we cannot but believe that those interested in this case took precautions in a matter of such importance to them.<sup>1085</sup>

<sup>1079</sup> Perhaps a similar parallel with Zechariah 12: 10: comp. John 19: 37; Rev. 1: 7.

<sup>1080</sup> Here, again, we may suspect an *a priori* symbolism: comp. 1 John 5: 6-8; Apollinaris in the *Chronique Pascale*, p. 7.

<sup>1081</sup> John 19: 34, 35.

<sup>1082</sup> Herodotus, 7: 194; Josephus, *Life*, 75.

<sup>1083</sup> *In Matt. Comment. series*, 140.

<sup>1084</sup> Mark 15: 44, 45.

<sup>1085</sup> The exigencies of their argument led the Christians afterwards to

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According to Roman custom, the corpse of Jesus ought to have remained hanging on the cross to become the prey of birds.<sup>1086</sup> According to Jewish law, it would have been removed in the evening, and laid in the place of infamy set apart for the burial of those who were executed.<sup>1087</sup> Had Jesus had for his disciples only poor Galileans, who were timid and without influence, the latter course would have been taken. But we have seen that, despite his lack of success at Jerusalem, he had gained the sympathy of some important persons who looked forward to the kingdom of God; and these, without avowing themselves his disciples, were strongly attached to him. One of these persons,<sup>1088</sup> Joseph, of the small town of Arimathea (Haramathaïm), went in the evening to ask the body from the procurator.<sup>1089</sup> Joseph was a rich and honourable man and a member of the Sanhedrim. The Roman law moreover at this period enacted that the body of the person executed should be delivered over to any one who claimed it.<sup>1090</sup> Pilate, who was ignorant of what had occurred at the *crurifragium*, was astonished that Jesus should be so soon dead, and summoned the centurion who had superintended the execution, in order to learn how this was; but, after having received the centurion's assurances, he granted Joseph the object of his request. Probably the body had already been taken down from the cross. It was delivered to Joseph, that he might do with it as he pleased.

exaggerate these precautions, especially when the Jews had adopted the course of insisting that the body of Jesus had been stolen. See Matt. 27: 62-66; 28: 11-15.

<sup>1086</sup> Horace, *Ep.* 1, 16: 48; Juvenal, 14: 77; Lucan, 6: 544; Plautus, *Miles*, 2, 4: 19; Artemidorus, *Onir.*, 2: 53; Pliny, 36: 24; Plutarch, *Cleomenes*, 39; Petronius, *Sat.* 111, 112.

<sup>1087</sup> Mishna, *Sanhedrin*, 6: 5, 6.

<sup>1088</sup> Probably the ancient *Ramah* of Samuel, in the tribe of Ephraim.

<sup>1089</sup> Matt. 27: 57, 58; Mark 15: 42-45; Luke 23: 50-53; John 19: 38.

<sup>1090</sup> Digest, 48: 24; *De cadaveribus punitorum*.

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Another secret friend, Nicodemus,<sup>1091</sup> whom we have already seen using his influence in favour of Jesus, came forward at this moment. He arrived bearing an ample provision of the materials necessary for embalming. Joseph and Nicodemus interred Jesus according to Jewish custom—that is to say, by wrapping him in a sheet with myrrh and aloes. The Galilean women were present,<sup>1092</sup> and no doubt took part in the proceedings with bitter cries and tears.

It was late, and all this was done in great haste. The place in which the body was to be finally deposited had not yet been chosen. Moreover, its being carried thither might have implied delay to a late hour, and a possible violation of the Sabbath; and the disciples still conscientiously observed the regulations of the Jewish law. A temporary interment was therefore decided on.<sup>1093</sup> There was close at hand, in a garden, a tomb recently dug out in the rock which had never been used. It probably belonged to one of the believers.<sup>1094</sup> Funeral caves, when destined for a single body, were in the form of a small room, at the bottom of which the place for the corpse was marked by a trough or couch let into the wall, and surmounted by an arch.<sup>1095</sup> As these caves were cut out of the sides of sloping rocks, the entrance, which was closed

<sup>1091</sup> John 19: 39–42.

<sup>1092</sup> Matt. 27: 61; Mark 15: 47; Luke 23: 55.

<sup>1093</sup> John 19: 41, 42.

<sup>1094</sup> A tradition (Matt. 27: 60) denotes Joseph of Arimathea as himself the owner of the tomb.

<sup>1095</sup> The cave supposed in the time of Constantine to be the tomb of Christ had this form, as may be inferred from the description of Arculphus (in Mabillon, *Acts SS. Ord. S. Bened.*, 3, 2: 504), and from the vague traditions preserved at Jerusalem among the Greek clergy on the condition of the rock now hidden by the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre. But the proofs of identification relied on, under Constantine, were feeble or void (see especially Sozomen, *H. E.*, 2: 1). Even admitting the site of Golgotha to be nearly accurate, the Holy Sepulchre would

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by a stone very difficult to move, was in the floor. The body of Jesus was placed in the cave,<sup>1096</sup> the stone was rolled to the door, and promises were made to return in order to give him a more complete burial. But the next day being a solemn Sabbath, the work was postponed till the day following.<sup>1097</sup>

The women went away after carefully noticing how the body was laid. They employed the remaining hours of the evening in making new preparations for the embalming. On the Saturday all rested.<sup>1098</sup>

On the Sunday morning the women, Mary Magdalen being the first, came at a very early hour to the tomb.<sup>1099</sup> The stone had been removed from the opening, and the body was no longer in the place where it had been laid. At the same time, the strangest rumours began to spread in the Christian community. The cry, "He is risen!" quickly ran from disciple to disciple. Love caused it to find ready credence everywhere. What had taken place? In treating of the history of the apostles we shall have to examine this point, and to inquire into the origin of the legends relating to the resurrection. For the historian, the life of Jesus finishes with his last breath. But such was the impression he had left in the heart of his disciples and of a few devoted women, that during some weeks more it was as though he were still alive and consoling them. By whom had his body been taken away? <sup>1100</sup> Under what conditions did enthusiasm, always prone to credulity, create the group of narratives by which faith in the resurrection was

have no serious claim to be authentic. In any case, the aspect of the locality is completely changed.

<sup>1096</sup> Cor. 15: 4.

<sup>1097</sup> Luke 23: 56.

<sup>1098</sup> Luke 23: 54-56.

<sup>1099</sup> Matt. 28: 1; Mark 16: 1; Luke 24: 1; John 20: 1.

<sup>1100</sup> See Matt. 28: 15; John 20, 2.



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established? In the absence of contradictory documents this can never be ascertained. Let us say, however, that the strong imagination of Mary Magdalen<sup>1101</sup> played an important part in the matter.<sup>1102</sup> Divine power of love! Sacred moments in which the passion of one possessed gave to the world a resuscitated God!

<sup>1101</sup> She had been possessed by "seven demons"; Mark 16: 9; Luke 8: 2.

<sup>1102</sup> This is evident chiefly in the sixteenth chapter of Mark, verses 9-11, and so on to the end, making a conclusion quite independent of the original ending of this Gospel at verse 8. (See MS. *B* of the Vatican, and the Sinaitic codex.) In the fourth Gospel (20: 1, 2, 11, 12, 18) Mary of Magdala is also the first and solitary witness of the resurrection.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### *The Fate of the Enemies of Jesus*

According to the calculation adopted by us, the death of Jesus happened in the year 33 of our era.<sup>1103</sup> At all events it could not have been either before the year 29, the preaching of John and Jesus having begun in the year 28,<sup>1104</sup> or after the year 35, since in 36, and probably before the Passover, both Pilate and Kaiapha lost their offices.<sup>1105</sup> The death of Jesus appears, however, to have had no connection whatever with these two removals.<sup>1106</sup> In his retirement, Pilate probably never for a moment dreamt of the forgotten episode which was to hand down his pitiful renown to the most distant posterity. As to Kaiapha, he was succeeded by Jonathan, his brother-in-law, son of the same Hanan who had played the chief part in the trial of Jesus. The pontificate was kept in the Sadducean family of Hanan for a long time still, and the latter, more powerful than ever, did not cease to wage against the disciples and family of Jesus the implacable war which it had commenced against the founder. Christianity, which to Hanan owed the decisive act of its foundation, to him owed also its first

<sup>1103</sup> The year 33 corresponds well with one of the data of the problem; namely, that the 14th of Nisan was Friday. If we reject this date, we must, to find another which fills this condition, go back to 29 or forward to 36 (see *ante*, p. 354, note 7).

<sup>1104</sup> Luke 3: 1.

<sup>1105</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 4: 2, 3.

<sup>1106</sup> The assertion to the contrary, made by Tertullian and Eusebius, rests on an apocryphal or a worthless legend (see Philo. *Cod. apocr. N. T.* p. 813 *et seq.*). The suicide of Pilate (Euseb. *Hist.* 2: 7; *Chron.* ad Ann. 1 Caii) seems also to be legendary (Tischendorf, *Evang. apocr.* p. 432. *et seq.*).

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martyrs. He was reputed one of the happiest men of his time.<sup>1107</sup> The man who was really guilty of the death of Jesus ended his life full of honours and respect, never for an instant having doubted that he had rendered a great service to his nation. His sons continued to rule in the Temple, with difficulty kept in subjection by the procurators, and often dispensing with the consent of the latter in order to gratify their violent and haughty instincts.<sup>1108</sup>

Antipas and Herodias also soon disappeared from the political stage. Herod Agrippa having been raised to the dignity of king by Caligula, the jealous Herodias swore that she too would be a queen. Incessantly goaded on by this ambitious woman, who treated him as a coward, because he tolerated a superior in his family, Antipas overcame his natural indolence, and betook himself to Rome that he might solicit the title which his nephew had just obtained, in the year 39 of our era. But the affair turned out in the worst possible manner for him. Prejudiced in the eyes of the emperor by Herod Agrippa, Antipas was removed, and dragged out the rest of his life in exile at Lyons and in Spain. Herodias remained with him in his disgrace.<sup>1109</sup> At least a hundred years were to pass by before the name of their obscure subject, now become deified, appeared in these distant lands to brand upon their tombs the murder of John the Baptist.

As for the wretched Judas of Kerioth, fearful legends were current about his death. It was asserted that he bought a field in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem with the price of his perfidy. There was in fact, to the south of Mount Zion, a place named *Hakeldama* ("the field of

<sup>1107</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 20, 9: 1.

<sup>1108</sup> Josephus, *ibid.*; Tosiphta, *Menachoth*, 2.

<sup>1109</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 7: 1, 2; *Wars*, 2, 9: 6.

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blood").<sup>1110</sup> This, it was supposed, was the property acquired by the traitor.<sup>1111</sup> According to one tradition he slew himself.<sup>1112</sup> According to another, he had a fall in his field, causing a rupture of which he died.<sup>1113</sup> According to others he died of a sort of dropsy, attended by repulsive circumstances, which were regarded as a punishment from heaven.<sup>1114</sup> The desire of making Judas a counterpart of Achitophel,<sup>1115</sup> and of showing in him the accomplishment of the menaces which the Psalmist pronounces against the perfidious friend,<sup>1116</sup> perhaps gave rise to these legends. It may be that in the retirement of his field of Hakeldama, Judas led a quiet and obscure life, while his former friends were conquering the world and spreading his infamy abroad. Perhaps also the terrible hatred which was concentrated on his head culminated in acts of violence in which was seen the finger of heaven.

The time of the great Christian vengeance was, however, far distant. The new sect was in no way responsible for the catastrophe which Judaism was soon to experience. The synagogue did not understand till much later to what it exposed itself by putting intolerant laws in force. The empire was certainly still farther from suspecting that its

<sup>1110</sup> Jerome, *De situ*, etc., under the word "Acheldama." Eusebius (*ibid.*) says on the north; but the itineraries support Jerome. The tradition which gives this name to the burial-ground in the valley of Hinnom goes back as far as to the time of Constantine.

<sup>1111</sup> Acts 1: 18, 19. Matthew (or his interpolator) has given the less satisfactory form of the tradition, connecting with it the circumstance of the strangers' burial-place close by, and finding in it an imaginary verification of Zech. 11: 12, 13.

<sup>1112</sup> Matt. 27: 5.

<sup>1113</sup> Acts 1: 18, 19. Papias, in Œcumenius, *Ennarr. in Act. Apost.* 2 and in F. Münter, *Fragm. Patr. græc.* (Hafn, 1788), fasc. 1: 17 *et seq.*; Theophylact, *In Matt.* 27: 5.

<sup>1114</sup> Papias (in Münter) and Theophylact, as above.

<sup>1115</sup> 2 Sam. 17: 23.

<sup>1116</sup> Psalms 69 and 109.

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future destroyer was born. For nearly three hundred years it was to follow its path without imagining that by its side principles were growing up that were destined to subject the world to a complete transformation. At once theocratic and democratic, the idea cast into the world by Jesus was, together with the Teutonic invasion, the most active cause of the dissolution of the work of the Cæsars. On the one hand, the right of all men to participate in the kingdom of God was proclaimed; on the other, religion was henceforth separated in principle from the state. Rights of conscience, withdrawn from political law, came to constitute a new power—the “spiritual power.” More than once this power has belied its origin. For ages bishops have been princes, and the pope, a king; the so-called empire of souls has at various times shown itself as a terrible tyranny, employing rack and stake to maintain itself. But the day will come when separation will bear its fruits, when the domain of things spiritual will cease to be called a “power,” and be called “freedom.” Born of the conscience of a man of the people, developed amongst the people, first beloved and admired by the people, Christianity was impressed with an original character which will never be effaced. It was the first revolutionary triumph, the victory of popular feeling, the advent of the simple in heart, the inauguration of the beautiful as understood by the people. Thus, in the aristocratic societies of the ancient world, Jesus opened the breach through which all will pass.

The civil power in fact, although innocent of the death of Jesus (it only countersigned the sentence, and even that in spite of itself), ought to bear a heavy part of the responsibility. In presiding over the scene at Calvary, the state inflicted a serious blow upon itself. A legend full of all kinds of irreverence prevailed, and became known

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throughout the whole world—a legend in which the constituted authorities played a detestable part, in which it was the accused that was in the right, and in which judges and public officials were leagued against the truth. Seditious in the highest degree, the history of the Passion, spread by a thousand popular images, displayed the Roman eagles as sanctioning the most iniquitous of executions, soldiers carrying it out, a prefect commanding it. What a blow for all established powers! They have never wholly recovered from it. How can they assume infallibility towards poor men, when they have on their conscience the gigantic blunder of Gethsemane? <sup>1117</sup>

<sup>1117</sup> This popular feeling was still alive in Brittany when I was a child. The armed police was there regarded—as the Jew was elsewhere—with a certain pious repugnance; for that was the power which arrested Jesus!



## CHAPTER XXVIII

### *The Essential Nature of the Work of Jesus*

Jesus, we have seen, never emerged in action from Jewish circles. Although his sympathy for those despised by orthodoxy led him to admit pagans into the kingdom of God,—although he may have resided more than once in a pagan country, and once or twice may be seen in kindly relations with unbelievers,<sup>1118</sup>—it can be said that his life was entirely passed in the small and compact world into which he was born. In Greek or Roman countries he was never heard of; his name appears only in profane authors living a hundred years later, and even then indirectly in relation to seditious movements provoked by his doctrine, of persecutions suffered by his disciples.<sup>1119</sup> Even on Judaism itself Jesus made no durable impression. Philo, who died about the year 50, had not the slightest knowledge of him. Josephus, born in the year 37, and writing at the end of the century, mentions his execution in a few lines,<sup>1120</sup> as an event of secondary importance; and in his enumeration of the sects of his time he omits the Christians altogether.<sup>1121</sup> Justus of Tiberias, an historian of the same period, does not mention the name of Jesus.<sup>1122</sup> Nor in the *Mishnah* is there any trace of the new school; the passages in the two *Gemaras* in which the founder of Christianity is mentioned, do not date farther back than the fourth or

<sup>1118</sup> Matt. 8: 5-10; Luke 7: 1-10; John 12: 20-23; comp. Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 3, 3.

<sup>1119</sup> Tacitus, *Ann.* 15: 45; Suetonius, *Claudius*, 25.

<sup>1120</sup> *Antiq.*, 18, 3: 3 (the passage is altered by some Christian hand).

<sup>1121</sup> *Antiq.*, 18, 1: *Wars*, 2, 8; *Life*, 2.

<sup>1122</sup> Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 33.

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fifth century.<sup>1123</sup> The essential work of Jesus was to create around him a circle of disciples, whom he inspired with limitless affection, and in the hearts of whom he laid the germ of his doctrine. To have made himself beloved, "to the degree that after his death they ceased not to love him," was the great work of Jesus, and that which impressed his contemporaries most.<sup>1124</sup> His doctrine was so little dogmatic, that he never dreamed of writing it or of causing it to be written. Men became his disciples, not by believing this thing or that thing, but by being attached to his person and by loving him. A few sayings gathered together from memory, and, above all, the type of character he set forth, with the impression it had left, were what remained of him. Jesus was not a founder of dogmas, or a maker of creeds; he was one that infused a new spirit into the world. The least Christian men were, on the one hand, the doctors of the Greek Church, who, from the fourth century, began to drag Christianity into a path of puerile metaphysical discussions, and, on the other, the scholastics of the Latin Middle Ages, who wished to draw from the Gospel a colossal system with thousands of articles. To follow Jesus in expectation of the kingdom of God was all that being a Christian originally meant.

It will be thus understood how, by an exceptional destiny, pure Christianity, after eighteen centuries, still presents the character of a universal and eternal religion. It is really because the religion of Jesus is in some respects the final religion. The product of a perfectly spontaneous

<sup>1123</sup> Jerusalem Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 14: 16; *Aboda zara*, 2: 2; *Schabbath*, 14: 4. Babylonian Talmud, *Sanh.*, 43 a, 67 a; *Schab.*, 104 b, 116 b; comp. *Chagiga.*, 4 b; *Gittin*, 57 a, 90 a. The two Gemaras borrow the greater part of their data respecting Jesus from a burlesque and vulgar legend invented by the enemies of Christianity, without historical value; comp. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 1: 28, 32.

<sup>1124</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, 18, 3: 3.

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spiritual movement, freed at its birth from all dogmatic restraint, having struggled three hundred years for liberty of conscience, Christianity, despite its failures, still reaps the fruits of its glorious origin. To renew itself, it has but to return to the Gospel. The kingdom of God, as we conceive it, differs widely from the supernatural vision which the early Christians hoped to see shine forth in the clouds. But the feelings brought into the world by Jesus are indeed ours. His perfect idealism is the highest rule of the unspotted and virtuous life. He has created the heaven of pure souls, where is found that for which we ask in vain upon earth—the perfect nobility of the children of God, absolute sanctity, the total removal of worldly soilure, in short, freedom, banished by society as an impossibility, and existent in all its amplitude in the domain of thought alone. The great Master of those who take refuge in this ideal paradise is still Jesus. He was the first to proclaim the kingship of the spirit; the first to say, at least by his actions, “My kingdom is not of this world.” The foundation of true religion was indeed his work: after him, all that remains is to develop it and make it fruitful.

“Christianity” has thus become almost a synonym of “religion.” All that is done outside the great and good Christian tradition is destined to be barren. Jesus founded the religion, as Socrates founded the philosophy, and Aristotle the science, of humanity. There was philosophy before Socrates, science before Aristotle. Since Socrates and since Aristotle, philosophy and science have made immense progress; but all has been built on the foundation which they laid. In the same way, religious thought had, before Jesus, traversed many revolutions; since Jesus, it has made great conquests; but nevertheless men have not improved, and will not improve, upon the essential idea which Jesus created; once and for all he decided the real meaning of

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pure worship. The religion of Jesus is limitless. The church has had its epochs and its phases; it has imprisoned itself in creeds which have only been or will only be temporal: Jesus founded the absolute religion, excluding nothing, and determining nothing unless it be the spirit. His creeds are not rigid dogmas, but images susceptible of endless interpretations. One might seek in vain for a theological proposition in the Gospel. All confessions of faith travesty the idea of Jesus, just as mediæval scholasticism by proclaiming Aristotle the sole master of a science finally achieved, perverted, Aristotle's own ideas. Aristotle, had he been present at the scholastic debates, would have repudiated such a narrow doctrine; he would have been of the party of progressive science against that of routine which shielded itself beneath his authority; he would have applauded those who contradicted his teaching. In the same way, were Jesus to return amongst us, he would recognise as his disciples, not those who imagine they can compress him into a few catechismal phrases, but those who labour to carry on his work. Of all degrees of grandeur the eternal glory consists in having laid the first stone. It may be that in the physics and meteorology of modern times we may not discover a word of the treatises by Aristotle which bear these names; but, none the less, Aristotle remains the founder of natural science. Through whatever transformations dogma may pass, Jesus will still be in religion the creator of pure feeling, the Sermon on the Mount will never be superseded. No revolution will prevent us from attaching ourselves in religion to the great intellectual and moral ancestry at the head of which shines the name of Jesus. In this sense we are Christians, even when we separate ourselves on almost every point from the Christian tradition which has preceded us.

And this great foundation was indeed the personal work

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of Jesus. To make himself adored to this degree, he must have been adorable. Love comes not into being save through an object worthy to enkindle it, and we should know nothing of Jesus were it not for the passion inspired by him in those about him, which compels us still to affirm that he was great and pure. The faith, the enthusiasm, the constancy of the first Christian generation are only to be explained by supposing a man of colossal greatness to have been at the source of the whole movement. At sight of the marvellous creations of the ages of faith, two impressions, equally fatal to sound historical criticism, arise in the mind. On the one hand we are led to suppose these creations too impersonal; to a collective action we attribute that which has often been the work of one powerful will and of one lofty mind. On the other hand, we decline to see men like ourselves in the authors of those extraordinary movements which have decided the destiny of humanity. Let us conceive a wider idea of the powers concealed by nature in her bosom. Our civilisations, governed by minute restrictions, can give us no idea of the power of man at periods in which the originality of the individual had a freer field for its development. Let us imagine a recluse near our capitals, dwelling in the mountains, emerging thence from time to time to present himself at the palaces of monarchs, compelling the sentinels to stand aside, and in imperious tones announcing to the kings the approach of revolutions in which he has been the moving spirit. The very idea provokes a smile. Such, however, was Elias; but Elias the Tishbite in our days would not pass the gate of the Tuileries. The preaching of Jesus and his free activity in Galilee do not deviate less completely from the social conditions to which we are accustomed. Free from our polished conventionalities, exempt from the uniform education which refines us, but greatly stunts our individ-

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uality, these intense souls carried a surprising energy into action. They loom on our sight as the giants of an heroic age, which cannot have been real. Profound error! Those men were our brothers; they were of our stature, they felt and thought as we. But the breath of God was free within them; in us, it is fettered by the iron bonds of social pettiness, and condemned to irremediable mediocrity.

Let us place then the personality of Jesus on the highest summit of human greatness. Let us not be misled by exaggerated doubts in the presence of a legend which forever imprisons us in a superhuman world. The life of Francis of Assisi is also but a tissue of miracles. And yet has the existence of Francis of Assisi, and of the part he played, ever been held in doubt? Let us say no longer that the glory of the foundation of Christianity belongs to the multitude of the early Christians, and not to him whom legend has deified. The inequality of men is much more marked in the East than amongst us. There it is no uncommon thing to see arise, in the midst of a general atmosphere of wickedness, characters whose greatness causes us wonderment. Far from Jesus having been created by his disciples, he shows himself in all things superior to his disciples. The latter, with the exception of St. Paul and perhaps of St. John, were men lacking both invention and genius. St. Paul himself bears no comparison with Jesus, and as to St. John, he has only shown in his Apocalypse how much the poetry of Jesus inspired him. Hence the great superiority of the Gospels amidst the writings of the New Testament. Hence the painful fall we experience in passing from the history of Jesus to that of the apostles. Even the evangelists themselves, who have bequeathed the image of Jesus to us, are so far beneath him of whom they speak that they constantly misrepresent him, from their inability to attain to his height. Their writings are full of



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errors and misconceptions. At every line we feel that a discourse of divine beauty has been transcribed by narrators who do not understand it, and substitute their own ideas for those which they only half comprehend. On the whole, the character of Jesus, far from having been embellished by his biographers, has been lowered by them. Criticism, to find what he really was, must discard a series of misconceptions resulting from his disciples' inferiority. These painted him as they conceived of him, and frequently, while thinking to raise him, have in reality degraded him.

I know that our modern ideas are more than once offended in this legend, conceived by another race, under another sky, and in the midst of other social needs. There are virtues which, in some respects, conform better with our taste. The good and mild Marcus Aurelius, the humble and gentle Spinoza, since they had no belief in their power to perform miracles, were free from some errors in which Jesus shared. Spinoza, in his profound obscurity, had an advantage which Jesus did not seek. By our extreme discretion in the employment of means of conviction, by our absolute sincerity, and by our disinterested love of the pure idea, we have founded—all we who have devoted our lives to science—a new ethical ideal. But the judgments of general history should not be restricted to considerations of personal merit. Marcus Aurelius and his noble teachers have had no permanent influence on the world. Marcus Aurelius left behind him beautiful books, an execrable son, and a decaying nation. Jesus remains for mankind an inexhaustible principle of moral regeneration. Philosophy does not suffice for the multitude. They must have sanctity. An Apollonius of Tyana, with his miraculous legend, is of necessity more successful than a Socrates with his cold reason. "Socrates," it was said, "leaves men on the earth, Apollonius takes them to

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heaven; Socrates is but a sage, Apollonius is a god." <sup>1125</sup> Religion, thus far, has never existed without an element of asceticism, of piety, and of marvel. When, after the Antonines, it was desired to make a religion of philosophy, it was requisite to transform the philosophers into saints, to write the "edifying life" of Pythagoras or Plotinus, to attribute to them a legend, virtues of abstinence, meditation, and supernatural powers, without which neither credence nor authority were in that age to be found.

Let us abstain then from mutilating history in order to satisfy our petty susceptibilities. Which of us, pigmies as we are, could do what the extravagant Francis of Assisi, or the hysterical saint Theresa, has done? Let medicine have names to express these great eccentricities of human nature; let it maintain that genius is a disease of the brain; let it see, in a certain moral sensitiveness, the commencement of consumption; let it class enthusiasm and love as nervous symptoms—it matters little. "Healthy" and "diseased" are entirely relative terms. Who would not rather be diseased like Pascal than healthy like the common herd? The narrow ideas about madness which are prevalent in our time very seriously mislead our historical judgments in questions of this order. A state in which a man says things of which he is not conscious, in which thought is produced without the summons and control of the will, now makes him liable to be confined as a lunatic. Formerly all this was called prophecy and inspiration. The finest things in the world have resulted from a state of fever; every great creation involves a rupture of equilibrium; by a law of nature child-birth is a violent state.

We acknowledge indeed that Christianity is a creation

<sup>1125</sup> Philosotratius, "Life of Apollonius," 4: 2; 7: 11; 8: 7. Ennapius "Lives of the Sophists," pp. 454, 500 (ed. Didot).

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too complex to have been the work of a single man. In one sense, all mankind have co-operated therein. There are no people so circumscribed as not to receive some breath of influence from without. History is full of strange coincidences, which cause very remote portions of the human species, without communication with each other, to arrive simultaneously at almost identical ideas and imaginations. In the thirteenth century, the Latins, the Greeks, the Syrians, the Jews, and the Mussulmans created scholasticism, and very nearly the same scholasticism from York to Samarcand; in the fourteenth century every one in Italy, in Persia, and in India yielded to a taste for mystical allegory; in the sixteenth, art was developed in a very similar manner in Italy, and at the court of the Great Moguls, without St. Thomas, Barhebraeus, the rabbis of Narbonne, or the *Motecallemin* of Bagdad having known each other, without Dante and Petrarch having seen any *sufi*, without any pupil of the schools of Perouse or of Florence having visited Delhi. One might say that there are great moral influences running through the world like epidemics, without distinction of frontiers or race. The interchange of ideas in the human species does not operate solely by books or direct instruction. Jesus was ignorant of the very name of Buddha, of Zoroaster, of Plato; he had read no Greek book, no Buddhist *Sudra*, yet notwithstanding there was in him more than one element, which, without his suspecting it, emanated from Buddhism, Parseeism, or the Greek wisdom. All this came through secret channels and by that kind of sympathy which exists between the different parts of mankind. The great man, on the one hand, receives all from his age; on the other, he governs his age. To show that the religion founded by Jesus was the natural consequence of what had preceded it, is in no way to diminish its excellence, but only to prove that it had a reason for

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its existence, and that it was legitimate—in other words, that it was in conformity with the instincts and needs of the heart in a given period.

Is it more just to say that Jesus owes all to Judaism, and that his greatness is only that of the Jewish people? No one is more disposed than myself to accord a high place to this unique people, whose particular gift seems to have been to contain in its midst the extremes of good and evil. No doubt Jesus came from Judaism; but he came from it as Socrates came from the schools of the sophists, as Luther came from the Middle Ages, as Lamennais from Catholicism, as Rousseau from the eighteenth century. A man is of his age and of his race even when he reacts against his age and his race. Far from Jesus having carried Judaism forward, he represents the rupture with the Jewish spirit. Even supposing that, in this respect, his thought may lend itself to some ambiguity, the general direction of Christianity after him permits no misconception. The tendency of Christianity has been to move farther and farther from Judaism. It will become perfect by returning to Jesus, but certainly not by returning to Judaism. The great originality of the founder remains then undiminished; his glory admits none to share it legitimately.

Undoubtedly circumstances greatly aided the success of this extraordinary revolution; but circumstances only support that which is just and true. Every branch of human development has its privileged epoch, in which it attains perfection without effort by a kind of spontaneous instinct. No labour of reflection could succeed in afterwards producing the masterpieces which nature creates at such moments by inspired geniuses. What the golden age of Greece was for secular art and literature, the age of Jesus was for religion. Jewish society exhibited the most ex-

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traordinary moral and intellectual state which the human species has ever passed through. It was indeed one of those divine hours in which great things come to pass by the co-operation of a thousand hidden forces, in which great souls find a flood of admiration and sympathy to sustain them. The world, delivered from the extremely narrow tyranny of small municipal republics, enjoyed great liberty. Roman despotism did not make itself felt disastrously until much later; and it was moreover always less oppressive in distant provinces than in the centre of the empire. Our petty preventive interferences (far more destructive than death to things spiritual) did not exist. Jesus, during three years, was able to lead a life which, in our societies, would have brought him twenty times before the magistrates. The laws now in force regarding the illegal exercise of medicine would alone have sufficed to cut short his career. The sceptical dynasty of the Herods, on the other hand, paid little attention to religious movements; under the Asmoneans, Jesus would probably have been arrested at the outset. In such a state of society a reformer risked only death; and death is a gain to those who labour for the future. Imagine Jesus condemned to bear the burden of his divinity until his sixtieth or seventieth year, losing his heavenly fire, wearing himself out little by little under the necessities of an unparalleled mission! Everything favours those who are marked for special destiny; they go on to glory by a kind of invincible impulse and command of fate.

This sublime being, who, day by day, still presides over the destiny of the world, we may call divine, not in the sense that Jesus has absorbed all divinity, or has been identical with it, but in the sense that Jesus is he who has caused his fellow-men to make the greatest step towards the divine. Mankind in its totality offers to view an as-

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semblage of low and egoistic beings only superior to the animal in that their selfishness is more reflective. But from the midst of this uniform vulgarity there are columns rising towards heaven and bearing witness to a nobler destiny. Jesus is the highest of these columns which show to man whence he comes and whither he must go. In him was concentrated all that is good, all that is lofty in our nature. He was not sinless; he conquered these same passions that we fight against; no angel of God comforted him save his own good conscience; no Satan tempted him save that which every man bears in his heart. Just as many of his great qualities have been lost to us through the intellectual failings of his disciples, so it is probable that many of his faults have been concealed. But never has any man so much as he made the interests of humanity predominate in his life over the pettiness of self-love. Unreservedly bound to his mission, he subordinated all things to that mission so entirely that, towards the end of his life, the universe no longer existed for him. It was by this intensity of heroic will that he conquered heaven. There never was a man, Sakyamauni perhaps excepted, who has to this degree trampled under foot, family, the joys of the world, and all temporal cares. Jesus lived only for his Father and for the divine mission which he believed himself fated to fulfil.

As for us, eternal children, fated to be powerless as we are, we who labour without reaping, we who will never see the fruit of that which we have sown, let us bow down before these demi-gods. They were able to do that which we cannot do; to create, to affirm, to act. Will great originality be born again, or will the world be content henceforth to follow the paths opened by the bold creators of distant ages? We know not. But whatever the unexpected phenomena of the future, Jesus will never be



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surpassed. His worship will constantly renew its youth, the legend of his life will bring ceaseless tears, his sufferings will soften the best hearts; all the ages will proclaim that, amongst the sons of men, none has been born who is greater than Jesus.

TO THE PURE SOUL OF MY

SISTER HENRIETTE,

WHO DIED AT BYBLOS, 24TH OF SEPTEMBER, 1861.

*In the bosom of God, where you are now at rest, do you remember those long days at Ghazir, where, alone with you, I wrote these pages which drew their inspiration from the places we had visited together? Sitting silent by my side, you read over every page and copied it as soon as written; at our feet stretched the sea, the villages, the ravines, the mountains. When the overpowering light of day had given place to the unnumbered host of the stars, your cautious doubts and subtle questions led me back to the sublime object of our common thoughts. One day you told me that you would love this book, because it had been written with you, and because it was after your own heart. If, at times, you feared for it the narrow judgments of the man of frivolous mind, you were always full of assurance that souls truly religious would end by finding pleasure in it. In the midst of these sweet meditations the Angel of Death smote us both with his wing; the sleep of fever seized us at the self-same hour; I awoke alone! Now you sleep in the land of Adonis, near holy Byblos and the sacred waters whither the women of the ancient mysteries were wont to come and mingle their tears. O my good genius, reveal to me whom you loved, these truths that have kingship over death, that shield us from the dread of it, that make it almost beloved!*

# INTRODUCTION

TREATING PRINCIPALLY OF THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS OF  
THIS HISTORY

A history of the "Origins of Christianity" should include all that obscure and (so to speak) subterranean period which extends from the earliest beginnings of this religion to the time when its existence becomes a public fact, well known, apparent to every eye. Such a history would consist of four parts. The first, which I now present to the public, treats of the particular fact which was the starting point of the new religion, and is wholly filled with the sublime personality of the Founder. The second would treat of the Apostles and their immediate disciples; or, more strictly, of the revolutions which took place in religious thought in the first two generations of Christianity. This would end about the year 100, when the last friends of Jesus were just dead, and when all the books of the New Testament had almost assumed the form in which we now read them. The third would set forth the state of Christianity under the Antonines. We should observe it slowly unfolding, and waging almost constant war against the empire, which in turn, being at that moment perfect in its complex administration and governed by philosophers, contends against the growing sect as a secret and theocratic society, obstinately disowning and continually undermining the supreme authority. This part would embrace the whole of the second century. The fourth and

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last part would show the progress of Christianity from the time of the Syrian emperors. We should see the elaborate structure created by the Antonines crumbling away: the decay of ancient civilisation irrevocable, and Christianity profiting by its ruin; Syria conquering the entire West, and Jesus, with the gods and deified sages of Asia, taking possession of a society for which philosophy and a purely civil government are no longer enough. It is then that the religious ideas of the races settled upon the coasts of the Mediterranean undergo a great change. Eastern religions everywhere take the lead; Christianity, having become a very powerful church, forgets utterly its dreams of a millennium, breaks its last connections with Judaism, and passes entirely into the Greek and Roman world. The strifes and the literary labours of the third century, which now stand out in open day, would be described only in outline. Still more briefly I should relate the persecutions of the early years of the fourth century, the last effort of the empire to return to those old principles which wholly refused to religious associations a place in the state. Finally, the change of policy which under Constantine inverted the position and made of the most free and most spontaneous religious movement an official worship subject to state control and in its turn persecutor, would need only to be foreshadowed.

I do not know whether I shall have life and strength to fill out so vast a plan. I shall be satisfied if, after writing the Life of Jesus, it is given to me to relate, as I understand it, the history of the Apostles; the condition of the Christian conscience during the weeks which immediately succeeded the death of Jesus; the formation of the cycle of legends touching the resurrection; the first acts of the church in Jerusalem; the life of Saint Paul; the crisis at the time of Nero; the appearance of the Apocalypse; the

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ruin of Jerusalem; the foundation of the Hebrew-Christian sects of Batanæa; the compilation of the Gospels, and the rise of the great schools of Asia Minor. Everything pales by the side of that marvellous first century. By a peculiarity rare in history, we see much better what passed in the Christian world from the year 50 to 75, than from the year 80 to 150.

The plan upon which this history proceeds prevents the introduction into the text of long critical dissertations upon controverted points. An unbroken series of notes puts the reader in a position to verify in their original sources all the propositions in the text. These notes are strictly limited to citations at first hand,—I mean, to the indication of the original passages upon which each assertion or conjecture rests. I am aware that to persons little trained in these studies many other explanations would have been necessary; but it is not my habit to do over again what has once been done and well done. To cite only books written in French, those who will consult the works named below,<sup>1126</sup> which are for the most part excellent, will find explained in them a multitude of points upon which I have had to be very succinct. In particular, the detailed criticism of the Gospel texts has been done by Strauss in a manner which leaves

<sup>1126</sup> A. REVILLE: *Études critiques sur l'Évangile de St. Matthieu*, Leyden, 1862. E. REUSS: *Histoire de la théologie chrétienne au siècle apostolique; Hist. du canon des Écritures saintes dans l'Église chrétienne* Strassburg, 1860, 1862. M. NICOLAS: *Des doctrines religieuses des Juifs pendant les deux siècles antérieurs à l'ère chrétienne; Études critiques sur la Bible* (N. T.), Paris, 1860, 1864. D. F. STRAUSS: *Vie de Jésus* (tr. by M. Littré); *Nouvelle Vie de Jésus* (tr. by Neftzer and Dollfus), Paris, 1856, 1864. G. D'EICHTAL: *Les Évangiles*, Ptie. 1; *Examen crit. et compar. des trois premiers Évangiles*, Paris, 1863. T. COLANI: *J.-C. et les Croyances messianiques de son temps*, Strassburg and Paris, 1854. A. STAP: *Études hist. et crit. sur les origines du Christianisme*, Paris, 1866. R. DE LIESSOL, *Études sur la biogr. évang.*, London, 1854. *Revue de théol. et de phil. chrétienne*, 1850–57; *Nouvelle Rev. de théol.*, 1858–62: 3d sér., from 1863, Strassburg and Paris.

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little to be desired. Though he may at first have been deceived in his theory regarding the authorship of the Gospels,<sup>1127</sup> and though his book, in my opinion, has the fault of keeping far too closely on theological and far too little on historic ground,<sup>1128</sup> it is indispensable, if one would understand the motives which have guided me in a multitude of details, to follow the argument (always judicious, though sometimes a little subtle) of his book, which has been so well translated by my learned co-worker, M. Littré.

In respect of ancient testimony, I believe I have not overlooked any source of information. Not to mention a multitude of scattered data, we still have five great collections of writings respecting Jesus and the times in which he lived. These are: first, the Gospels and the New Testament writings in general; second, the compositions called the "Apocrypha of the Old Testament;" third, the works of Philo; fourth, those of Josephus; fifth, the Talmud. The writings of Philo have the inestimable advantage of showing us the thoughts which in the time of Jesus stirred souls occupied with great religious questions. Philo lived, it is true, in quite a different sphere of Judaism from Jesus; yet, like him, he was quite free from the Pharisaic spirit which reigned at Jerusalem. Philo is, in truth, the elder brother of Jesus. He was sixty-two years of age when

<sup>1127</sup> The important results obtained on this point have all been acquired since the first edition of Strauss's work; while in his successive editions the learned critic has done justice to them with great candour.

<sup>1128</sup> There is hardly need to remark that not a word in Strauss's book justifies the strange and absurd calumny by which it has been attempted to discredit, among superficial readers, a work so convenient, exact, thoughtful, and conscientious, though in its general views hurt by a too rigid system. Not only Strauss has never denied the existence of Jesus, but every page of his book implies that existence. What is true is that the author supposes the individuality of Jesus to be more nearly effaced, and so lost to us, than perhaps it is in fact.



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the prophet of Nazareth had reached the highest point of his activity, and he survived him at least ten years. How unfortunate that the accidents of Philo's life did not direct his steps into Galilee! What would he not have taught us!

Josephus, who wrote chiefly for the Pagans, has not the same sincerity of style. His meagre accounts of Jesus, John the Baptist, and Judas the Gaulonite are dry and colourless. We feel that he seeks to represent these movements, so profoundly Jewish in character and spirit, in a form which would be intelligible to Greeks and Romans. Taken as a whole, I believe the passage in regard to Jesus to be authentic. It is perfectly in the style of Josephus; and if that historian mentioned Jesus at all, it is just in this manner that he would have spoken of him. We feel, however, that the hand of a Christian has retouched the fragment, adding to it words without which it would have been well nigh blasphemous; <sup>1129</sup> also abridging and modifying some expressions.<sup>1130</sup> It is necessary to remember that Josephus owed his literary fortune to the Christians, who adopted his writings as essential documents of their sacred history. It is probable that in the second century they circulated an edition of them corrected according to Christian ideas. At all events, that which constitutes the immense interest of the books of Josephus in respect of our present subject is the vivid light they throw on the times. Thanks to this Jewish historian, Herod, Herodias, Antipas, Philip, Annas, Caiaphas, and Pilate are personages whom, so to speak, we touch, and see living before us with a vivid personality.

<sup>1129</sup> "If it is permitted to call him man."

<sup>1130</sup> Instead of ὁ χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν, it was probably χριστὸς οὗτος ἐλέγετο. Cf. *Antiquities*, 20, 9: 4. Origen, *In Matt.* 10: 17; *Contra Celsum*, 1: 47, 2: 13.

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The Apocrypha of the Old Testament, especially the Jewish portion of the Sibylline Poems, the Book of Enoch, the Assumption of Moses, the Fourth Book of Esdras, the Apocalypse of Baruch, together with the Book of Daniel (which is also itself a real Apocrypha), possess a primary importance in the history of the development of the messianic theories, and in the understanding of the conceptions of Jesus regarding the kingdom of God.<sup>1131</sup> The Book of Enoch, in particular, and the Assumption of Moses were much read in the circle of Jesus.<sup>1132</sup> Some expressions imputed to Jesus by the Synoptics are presented in the epistle attributed to Saint Barnabas as belonging to Enoch,—*ὡς Ἐνὼχ λέγει*.<sup>1133</sup> It is very difficult to determine the date of the different sections of which the book attributed to that patriarch is composed. None of them are certainly anterior to the year 150 B.C.: some of them may even have been written by a Christian pen. The section containing the discourses called "Similitudes," and extending from chapter xxxvii. to chapter lxxi., is suspected of being a Christian work. But this has not been proved. I am inclined to think that the Gospels contain allusions to this portion of "Enoch," or at least to similar passages (see

<sup>1131</sup> On this subject may be consulted Alexandre, *Carmina Sibyllina* (Paris, 1851-56); Reuss, *Les Sibylles chrétiennes*, in the *Revue de théologie*, April and May, 1861; Colani, *Jésus-Christ et les croyances messianiques*, p. 16 *et seq.*, with the works of Ewald, Dillmann, Volkmar, and Hilgenfeld.

<sup>1132</sup> Ep. of Jude, ver. 6, 14; 2 Pet. 2: 4; Test. of the 12 Patriarchs, *pass.*; Jud. 9 (see Origen, *De Principiis*, 3, 2: 1); Didymus Alex. (*Max. Bibl. Vet. Patr.* 4: 336). Cf. Matt. 24: 21 *et seq.*, with *Assumpt. Mosis*, 8, 10 (Hilgenfeld's ed. p. 105); and Rom. 2: 15, with the same, pp. 99, 100.

<sup>1133</sup> Barn. 4, 16 (*Cod. Sinait.*, ed. Hilg., 8, 52); cf. Enoch, 89: 56 *et seq.*; Matt. 24: 22; Mark 13: 20. See other like coincidences below (p. 48, n.; 105, n.; 340, n.). Compare also the language of Jesus reported by Papias (Iren. *Adv. Hær.* 5, 33: 3, 4) with Enoch 10: 19, and with Apoc. of Baruch, § 29 (Ceriani, *Monum. Sacr. et prof.* 1, 1: 80).

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*ante*, p. 204, note). Perhaps this part is merely proved to have been altered. Other Christian additions or revisions are recognisable here and there.<sup>1135</sup>

The collection of the Sibylline verses requires similar distinctions, but these are more easily established. The oldest part is the poem contained in Book 3, ver. 97–817; it appears to belong to about the year 140 B.C. Respecting the date of the Fourth Book of Esdras, everybody now is nearly agreed in assigning this Apocalypse to the year 97 A.D. It has been altered by the Christians. The Apocalypse of Baruch<sup>1136</sup> bears great resemblance to that of Esdras; we find there, as in the Book of Enoch, several utterances imputed to Jesus.<sup>1137</sup> As to the Book of Daniel, the character of the two languages in which it is written; the use of Greek words; the clear, precise, dated announcements of events which go back as far as the times of Antiochus Epiphanes; the false descriptions of ancient Babylon; the general tone of the book, which has nothing suggestive of the writings of the Captivity, but on the contrary corresponds, by numerous analogies, with the beliefs, the manners, the turn of imagination, of the epoch of the Seleucidæ; the apocalyptic form of the visions; the position of the book in the Hebrew canon, which is outside the series of the Prophets; the omission of Daniel in the panegyrics of chapter 49 of Ecclesiasticus, in which his rank was (as it were) hinted at,—with many another proof, a hundred times deduced,—do not permit a doubt that this book is a

<sup>1135</sup> The passage 67: 4 *et seq.*, in which the volcanic phenomena near Pozzuoli are described, does not prove the entire section to be later than A.D. 79, the date of the great eruption of Vesuvius. Allusions to like phenomena appear in Rev. 9, which belongs to A.D. 68.

<sup>1136</sup> Lately published in a Latin translation from the Syriac by Ceriani (*Anecd. sacr. et prof.*, vol. 1 fasc. 2, Milan, 1866).

<sup>1137</sup> See preceding notes.

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product of the general exaltation produced among the Jews by the persecution of Antiochus. It is not in the old prophetic literature that it must be classed; its place is at the head of apocalyptic literature, as the first model of a kind of composition after which were to come the various Sibylline poems, the Book of Enoch, the Assumption of Moses, the Apocalypse of John, the Ascension of Isaiah, and the Fourth Book of Esdras.

Hitherto, in the history of the origins of Christianity, the Talmud has been too much neglected. I think, with Geiger, that the true notion of the circumstances among which Jesus appeared must be sought in this strange compilation, where so much knowledge is mixed with the most worthless pedantry. Christian and Jewish theology have followed mainly two parallel paths; the history of the one cannot be understood without the history of the other. Moreover, innumerable material details in the Gospels find their commentary in the Talmud. The vast Latin collections of Lightfoot, Schöttgen, Buxtorf, and Otho contained already on this point a mass of information. I have taken upon myself to verify in the original all the citations that I have made, without an exception. The assistance which has been given in this part of my task by M. Neubauer, a learned Israelite, well versed in Talmudic literature, has enabled me to go further, and to elucidate certain parts of my subject by some new illustrations. The distinction between epochs is here very important,—the compilation of the Talmud extending from the year 200 to 500, or thereabout. We have given as much precision as was possible in the present condition of these studies. Dates so recent will excite fears among persons accustomed to attach value to a document only for the period in which it was written. Such scruples, however, would here be out of place. Jewish teaching from the Asmonean epoch down to the second

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century was chiefly oral. The mental habit thence resulting must not be judged by the customs of an age in which writing is common. The Vedas, the Homeric poems, the ancient Arabic lays, were for centuries preserved in memory, and yet these compositions present a very distinct and delicate form. In the Talmud, on the other hand, the form has no value. We may add that before the Mishna of Juda the saint, which wiped out the recollection of all the others, there were several essays at compilation, beginning farther back, perhaps, than is commonly supposed. The style of the Talmud is that of lecture-notes; the editors probably did no more than to arrange under certain titles the enormous medley of writings which, for generations, had accumulated in the different schools.

It remains for us to speak of the documents which claim to be biographies of the founder of Christianity and must naturally take the place of honour in a Life of Jesus. A complete treatise on the compilation of the Gospels would be a work of itself. Thanks to the careful research which for the last thirty years has been devoted to this question, a problem which might once have been held to be beyond our reach has found a solution quite sufficient for the requirements of history, though there is room still left for much uncertainty. We shall have occasion later on to revert to this, in view of the fact that the composition of the Gospels was one of the most important influences for the future of Christianity during the second half of the first century. We shall touch here only a single aspect of the subject, but one indispensable to the solidity of our narrative. Setting aside all that belongs to a picture of the apostolic times, we will inquire only to what extent data furnished by the Gospels can be employed in a history constructed on rational principles.<sup>1138</sup>

<sup>1138</sup> Those desiring ampler treatment may consult, besides the works

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That the Gospels are in part legendary is quite evident, inasmuch as they are full of miracles and of the supernatural; but there are legends and legends. Nobody disputes the principal features in the life of Francis of Assisi, although we meet the supernatural in it at every step. On the other hand no one gives credence to the "Life of Apollonius of Tyana," for the reason that it was written long after his own time, and avowedly as a pure romance. When, by whom, and under what conditions were the Gospels compiled? This is the chief question upon which the opinion we are to form of their credibility depends.

We know that each of the four Gospels bears at its head the name of a person well-known either in apostolic history or in the gospel history itself. If these titles are correct, it is clear that the Gospels, without ceasing to be in part legendary, acquire a high value, since they take us back to the half-century which followed the death of Jesus, and even in two cases to eye-witnesses of his acts.

In the case of Luke, doubt is hardly possible. The Gospel of Luke is a studied composition, founded upon earlier documents.<sup>1139</sup> It is the work of a man who selects, prunes, and combines. The author of this Gospel is undoubtedly the same as that of the Acts of the Apostles.<sup>1140</sup> Now, the author of the Acts appears to be a companion of Paul,<sup>1141</sup> an appellation which exactly fits Luke.<sup>1142</sup> I am aware that

before noted, the writings of Reuss, Schürer, Schwalb, Scholten (tr. by Réville), in the *Revue de théologie*, and of Réville in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, May and June, 1866.

<sup>1139</sup> Luke 1: 1-4.

<sup>1140</sup> Acts 1: 4.

<sup>1141</sup> From 16: 10, forward, the writer speaks of himself as an eye-witness.

<sup>1142</sup> Col. 4: 14; Philem. 24; 2 Tim. 4: 11. As the name *Luke* (abridged from *Lucanus*) is quite rare, we have not to apprehend here one of those homonyms which occasion so much perplexity in questions of N. T. criticism.



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more than one objection can be raised against this opinion; but the thing is beyond question: that the author of the third Gospel and of the Acts is a man belonging to the second apostolic generation, and this is sufficient for our purpose. The date of that Gospel may, however, be determined with quite enough precision by considerations drawn from the book itself. The twenty-first chapter of Luke, which is inseparable from the rest of the work, was certainly written after the siege of Jerusalem, but not very long after.<sup>1143</sup> We are here, then, on solid ground; for we have to do with a work throughout written by the same hand, and its unity is perfect.

The Gospels of Matthew and Mark do not show nearly the same stamp of individuality. They are impersonal compositions, in which the author wholly disappears. A proper name written at the head of such works does not count for much. We cannot, moreover, reason here as in the case of Luke. The date which belongs to a particular chapter (to Matthew 14, or Mark 13, for example) cannot be rigorously applied to these writings as a whole, for they are made up of fragments from epochs and sources quite distinct. In general, the third Gospel appears to be later than the first two and exhibits the character of a much more advanced composition. We cannot, however, conclude from this that the two Gospels of Mark and Matthew were in the same condition as we have them when Luke wrote his. These two works, entitled Mark and Matthew, in fact, long remained in a pliant condition (so to speak), and were susceptible of additions. On this point we have an excellent witness from the first half of the second century. This was Papias,

<sup>1143</sup> See ver. 9, 20, 24, 28, 29-32, and compare 22: 36. These passages are the more striking, since the writer feels the peril in predictions of so near date, and guards against it, either by softening such passages as Mark 13: 14-24, 29; Matt. 24: 15-29, 33; or else by question and answer, as in Luke 17: 20, 21.

bishop of Hierapolis, a grave man, a traditionist, who was busy all his life in collecting what could be learned from any one about Jesus.<sup>1144</sup> After declaring that in such cases he preferred oral tradition to books, Papias mentions two writings on the acts and words of Christ,—first, a writing of Mark, the interpreter of the Apostle Peter, a short, incomplete composition, without chronological order, including narratives and discourses (λεχθέντα ἢ πραχθέντα), composed from the information and recollections of the Apostle Peter;<sup>1145</sup> second, a collection of sayings (λόγια) written in Hebrew<sup>1146</sup> by Matthew, “which every one has translated<sup>1147</sup> as he could.” Certain it is that these two descriptions accord pretty well with the general tenor of the two books now called the “Gospel according to Matthew” and the “Gospel according to Mark,”—the former characterised by its long discourses, the second mainly anecdotic, and much more exact than the other on minor details, brief even to dryness, the discourses meagre and indifferently composed. Nevertheless, that these two works as read by us are precisely like those read by Papias cannot be asserted,—first, because the composition of Matthew, according to Papias, was made up solely of discourses in Hebrew, different translations of which were in circulation; and, secondly, because the writings of Mark and of Matthew were to him perfectly distinct, drafted without any

<sup>1144</sup> In Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 3: 39. No question can be raised as to the authenticity of this passage. Eusebius, in fact, far from exaggerating the authority of Papias, is embarrassed by his *naïveté*, his crude millenarianism, and gets out of it by treating him as a man of narrow mind. Compare Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, 3, 1: 1; 5, 38: 3, 4.

<sup>1145</sup> Papias, on this point, refers to a still older authority, that of “John the Elder” (see, as to this person, *post.*, p. 356, n. 1199.)

<sup>1146</sup> That is, in the Semitic [Aramean] dialect.

<sup>1147</sup> Ἑρμηνεύσει, referring as it does to ἐβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ, can only mean “translate.” A few lines before, ἐρμηνευτής occurs in the sense of *dragoman*.

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collusion, and it would seem in different languages. Now, in the present state of the texts, Matthew and Mark present parallel passages so long, and so perfectly identical, that we must suppose either that the final compiler of the first had the second before him (or vice versa), or that both copied from the same original. What appears most probable is that we have not the original composition of either Matthew or Mark; that the first two Gospels as we have them are adaptations, in which it was attempted to fill up the voids in one text from the other. In fact, every one wished to possess a complete copy. He whose copy contained only discourses required narrative, and vice versa. In this way "The Gospel according to Matthew" is found to have taken in nearly all the anecdotes of Mark, and "The Gospel according to Mark" contains to-day many of the details which have come from the *Logia* of Matthew. Each writer, moreover, drew largely from the oral tradition subsisting around him. This tradition is so far from having been exhausted by the Gospels, that the "Acts of the Apostles" and the earliest Fathers cite many sayings of Jesus apparently authentic, which are not found in the Gospels that we possess.

It matters little for our present purpose that we should press this analysis further, or attempt, on the one hand, to reconstruct after a fashion the original *Logia* of Matthew, or, on the other, to piece together the primitive story just as it left the pen of Mark. The *Logia* are doubtless represented in the longer discourses of Jesus, which make up a considerable portion of the first Gospel. These discourses, in fact, when detached from the rest, form a complete enough whole. As for the original narratives of Mark, the text of them seems to make its appearance now in the first, now in the second Gospel, but oftener in the second. In other words, the plan of the life of Jesus

in the Synoptics is founded on two original documents,—first, the discourses of Jesus collected by the Apostle Matthew; second, the collection of anecdotes and of personal information which Mark committed to writing from the recollections of Peter. It may be said that we still possess these two documents, mixed with facts from another source, in the first two Gospels, which bear, accurately enough, the titles, “Gospel according to Matthew” and “Gospel according to Mark.”

In any case, we cannot doubt that the discourses of Jesus were very early reduced to writing in the Aramean tongue; also, that his remarkable actions were very early taken down. These were not texts settled and fixed dogmatically. Besides the Gospels which have come down to us, there were others claiming equally to set forth the tradition of eye-witnesses.<sup>1148</sup> Little importance was given to these writings, while conservatives like Papias, in the first half of the second century, still preferred the oral tradition.<sup>1149</sup> Believing that the world was near its end, they had not much inclination to write books for the future; the sole concern was to keep in their heart the living image of him

<sup>1148</sup> Luke 1: 1, 2; Origen, *Homil. in Luc.* (init.); Jerome, *Comm. in Matt.*, proleg.

<sup>1149</sup> Papias in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 3: 39. Cf. Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.* 3, 2: 3. See also concerning Polycarp in the fragment of an epistle from Irenæus to Flavius, preserved by Eusebius, *H. E.*, 5: 20. ‘Ὁς γέγραπται, in Barnabas *Ep.* chap. 4, p. 12 (ed. Hilgenfeld), applies to words found in Matt. 22: 14; but those words, which occur twice in Matt. (20: 16; 22: 14), may be taken here from an apocryphal book, as is the case in Matt. 23: 34–36; 24: 20–28. (Cf. 4. Esd. 8: 3.) Note in the same chapter of Barnabas (p. 8) the singular coincidence of a passage ascribed to Enoch (employing the formula γέγραπται) with Matt. 24: 22; and compare γραφή as cited in Barn., chap. 16: (p. 52), with Enoch 89: 56. (See below, p. 366, n.) In the 3d ep. of Clement, chap. 2, and Justin, 1 *Apol.* 67, the Synoptics are clearly cited as sacred. In 1 Tim. 5: 18 we have an example of a proverb (found also in Luke 10: 7), or common saying, cited as “scripture” (λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή). This epistle, it may be remarked, was not written by Saint Paul.

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whom they hoped soon again to see in the clouds. Hence the small authority of the Gospel texts for nearly a hundred years. No scruple was felt at inserting paragraphs in them, or combining various narratives, or filling out one from another. The poor man who has only one book wishes it to contain all that is dear to his heart. These little books were lent by one to another; each transcribed into the margin of his copy the phrases and parables he found in others which affected him.<sup>1150</sup> The loveliest thing in the world was thus wrought out by a process obscure and wholly popular. No edition possessed an absolute value. The two epistles attributed to Clement of Rome quote the sayings of Jesus with notable variations.<sup>1151</sup> Justin, who often appears to what he calls "Memoirs of the Apostles," had before him a form of written gospel a little different from what we have; at all events, he takes no pains to quote them verbally.<sup>1152</sup> The Gospel citations in the pseudo-Clementine homilies, of Ebionite origin, present the same character. The spirit was everything, the letter nothing. It is when tradition weakens, in the latter half of the second century, that texts bearing the names of apostles or apostolic men assume a decisive authority and obtain the force of law. Even then free compositions were not absolutely interdicted; following the example of Luke, special Gospels continued to be written by recasting at will the substance of older texts.<sup>1153</sup>

Who does not own the value of documents constructed

<sup>1150</sup> Thus the touching narrative in John 8: 1-11 has always been current, without finding a fixed place in the accepted Gospels.

<sup>1151</sup> Clem. *Epist.* 1: 13; 2: 12.

<sup>1152</sup> Τὰ ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν ἀποστόλων, ἃ καλεῖται εὐαγγέλια. (The last words perhaps are interpolations.) Justin, *Apol.* 1: 16, 17, 33, 34, 38, 45, 66, 67, 77, 78; *Tryph.* 10, 17, 41, 43, 51, 53, 69, 70, 76-78, 88, 100, 101, 108, 111, 120, 125, 132.

<sup>1153</sup> See, concerning Tatian's Gospel in Theodoret, *Hæret. Fab.*, 1: 30.

thus out of the tender recollections and simple narratives of the first two Christian generations, still full of the strong impression produced by the revered founder, which seems to have long survived him? Let us add that these Gospels seem to have proceeded from those branches of the Christian family which were most closely related to Jesus. The final labour of compilation of the text which bears the name of Matthew appears to have been done in one of the countries situated to the northeast of Palestine,—such as Gaulonitis, Auranitis, and Batanæa, where many Christians took refuge at the time of the Roman war, where were still to be found in the second century relatives of Jesus,<sup>1154</sup> and where the first Galilean impulse was longer felt than elsewhere.

So far we have spoken only of the three Gospels called the Synoptics. It now remains to speak of the fourth, which bears the name of John. Here the question is much more difficult. Polycarp, the most intimate disciple of John, who often quotes the Synoptics in his epistle to the Philippians, makes no allusion to the fourth Gospel. Papias, who was equally attached to the school of John, and who, if he had not been his hearer, as Irenæus holds, had associated a great deal with his immediate disciples,—Papias, who had eagerly collected all the oral accounts relative to Jesus, does not say a word of a “Life of Jesus” written by the Apostle John.<sup>1155</sup> If such a mention had been found in his work, Eusebius, who puts in relief everything that bears on the literary history of the apostolic

<sup>1154</sup> Julius Africanus in Eusebius, *H. E.*, 1: 7.

<sup>1155</sup> Eusebius, *H. E.*, 3: 39. One would be tempted to find the fourth Gospel in the “narrations” of Aristion or the traditions of him whom Papias calls “John the Elder.” But Papias seems to offer these narrations and traditions as unwritten. If the extracts given by him were from that Gospel, Eusebius would have said so. Besides, the views of Papias, so far as we know them, are those of a millenarian, a believer in the Apocalypse, not at all one of the school of theology found in the fourth Gospel.



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age, would undoubtedly have mentioned it.<sup>1156</sup> Justin, perhaps, knew the fourth Gospel; <sup>1157</sup> but he certainly did not regard it as the work of the Apostle John, since he expressly designates that apostle as the author of the Apocalypse, and takes not the least account of the fourth Gospel in the numerous facts of the life of Jesus which he extracts from the "Memoirs of the Apostles." More than this, upon all the points where the Synoptics and the fourth Gospel differ he adopts opinions at complete variance with the latter.<sup>1158</sup> This is all the more surprising, seeing that the dogmatic tendencies of the fourth Gospel must have marvellously suited Justin.

The same remarks apply to the pseudo-Clementine Homilies. The words of Jesus quoted by that book are of the synoptic type. In two or three places <sup>1159</sup> there are, it would seem, facts borrowed from the fourth Gospel.

<sup>1156</sup> Let it not be said that Papias says nothing of Luke or Paul, and yet their writings were known in his day. Papias must have been an opponent of Paul, and he may not have known the composition of Luke, which was made in Rome for quite another Christian circle. But how, living at Hierapolis, in the very heart of the Johannine school, could he have ignored the Gospel written by such a master? Nor let it be said, that, as to Polycarp (4: 14) and Theophilus (4: 24), Eusebius does not set forth all the citations made by them from the N. T. scriptures. The special aim of the chapter (3: 39) regarding Papias made a mention of the fourth Gospel almost inevitable, if Eusebius found it in his writings.

<sup>1157</sup> A few passages—*Apol.* 1: 32, 61; *Tryph.* 88—lead one to think so. The theory of the *Logos* in Justin is not such that we are forced to suppose it to be taken from the fourth Gospel.

<sup>1158</sup> See references in note, p. 345. Observe especially *Apol.* 1: 14 *et seq.*, making it plain that Justin either did not know the discourses in John, or did not regard them as representing the teaching of Jesus.

<sup>1159</sup> *Homil.* 3: 52; 11: 26; 19: 22. It is to be noted that the citations seemingly made from the fourth Gospel by Justin and the writer of the Homilies coincide in part with one another, and show the same departures from the canonical text. (Compare with the above citations Justin, *Apol.* 1: 22, 61; *Trypho.* 69.) From this we might infer that the two writers consulted, not the fourth Gospel, but a source from which the writer of that Gospel may have drawn.

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But the author of the Homilies certainly does not accord to that Gospel an apostolic authority, since on many points he puts himself in direct contradiction with it. It appears that Marcion (about 140) could not have known this Gospel, or else attributed to it no importance as an inspired book.<sup>1160</sup> This Gospel accorded so well with his ideas that if he had known it he would have adopted it eagerly, and would not have been obliged, so as to have an ideal Gospel, to make a corrected edition of Luke. Finally, the apocryphal Gospels which may be referred to the second century, like the *Protevangelion* of James, the Gospel of Thomas the Israelite,<sup>1161</sup> work upon the synoptic canvas, but they take no account of the Gospel of John.

The intrinsic difficulties which result from the reading of the fourth Gospel itself are not less forcible. How is it that, by the side of information so precise, and in places felt to be that of eye-witnesses, we find discourses totally different from those of Matthew? How is it that the Gospel in question does not contain a parable or an exorcism? How can we explain—side by side with a general plan of the life of Jesus, which seems in some respects more satisfactory and more exact than that of the Synoptics—those singular passages in which one perceives a dogmatic interest peculiar to the author, ideas most foreign to Jesus, and sometimes indications which put us on our guard as to the good faith of the narrator? How is it, finally, that by the side of views the most pure, the most just, the most truly evangelical, we find those blemishes which we would rather look upon as the interpolation of an ardent sectary?

<sup>1160</sup> The passages of Tertullian, *De carne Christi*, 3, and *Adv. Marc.* 4: 3, 5, prove nothing against what is here said.

<sup>1161</sup> The apocryphal "Acts of Pilate" in our possession, which assume the fourth Gospel, are nowise what Justin (*Apol.* 1: 35, 48) and Tertullian (*Apol.* 20) speak of. It is even likely that the two Fathers speak of these Acts only from hearsay, and not as having read them.

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Is it indeed John, the son of Zebedee, the brother of James (who is not once mentioned in the fourth Gospel), who can have written in Greek those lectures of abstract metaphysics, to which the Synoptics offer no analogy? Is this the essentially Judaizing author of the Apocalypse,<sup>1162</sup> who, in so few years, has divested himself to this extent of his style and of his ideas? Can an "Apostle of the Circumcision" <sup>1163</sup> have composed a work more hostile to Judaism than the whole of Saint Paul's, a work in which the word "Jew" is almost equivalent to "enemy of Jesus" ? <sup>1164</sup> Is it indeed he, whose example was invoked by the partisans of the celebration of the Jewish passover in favour of their opinion,<sup>1165</sup> who could speak with a sort of disdain of the "Feasts of the Jews" and of the "Passover of the Jews" ? <sup>1166</sup> All this is important. For my part, I reject the idea that the fourth Gospel could have been written by the pen of a quondam Galilean fisherman. But that, taken all in all, this Gospel may have proceeded, about the end of the first century or the beginning of the second, from one of the schools of Asia Minor attached to John, that it presents to us a version of the life of the Master worthy of high consideration and often of preference, is indeed rendered probable, both by external evidence and by examining the document under consideration.

In the first place, no one doubts that about the year 170 the fourth Gospel did exist. At that date there broke out at Laodicea on the Lycus a controversy relative to the Pass-

<sup>1162</sup> Compare Justin, *Trypho*, 81. The Apocalypse is of the year 68. Supposing John ten years younger than Jesus, he must have been then about 60.

<sup>1163</sup> Gal. 2: 9. The words in Rev. 2: 2, 14, seem to contain a hostile reference to Paul.

<sup>1164</sup> See almost all the passages containing the word Ἰουδαῖοι.

<sup>1165</sup> Polycrates in Eusebius, *H. E.*, 5: 24.

<sup>1166</sup> John 2: 6, 13; 5: 11; 6: 4; 11: 55; 19: 42.

over, in which this Gospel played an important part.<sup>1167</sup> Apollinaris,<sup>1168</sup> Athenagoras,<sup>1169</sup> Polycrates,<sup>1170</sup> the author of the epistle to the Churches of Vienne and of Lyons,<sup>1171</sup> professed already in regard to the alleged narrative of John the opinion which soon became orthodox. Theophilus of Antioch (about 180) said positively that the Apostle John was the author of it,<sup>1172</sup> Irenæus<sup>1173</sup> and the Canon of Muratori<sup>1174</sup> attest the complete triumph of this Gospel, a triumph after which there was no longer any doubt.

Now, if, about the year 170, the fourth Gospel appeared as a writing of the Apostle John invested with full authority, is it not evident that at this date it was not a thing of yesterday? Tatian<sup>1175</sup> and the author of the epistle to Diognetus<sup>1176</sup> seem indeed to have made use of it. The part played by this Gospel in Gnosticism, and especially in the system of Valentinus,<sup>1177</sup> in Montanism,<sup>1178</sup> and in the controversy of the Alogi,<sup>1179</sup> is not less remarkable, and shows that from the last half of the second century this Gospel was included in every controversy, and served as a corner-stone for the development of dogma. The school

<sup>1167</sup> Eusebius, *H. E.*, 4: 26; 5: 23-25. *Chron. Pasc.* p. 6 *et seq.* (ed. Du Cange.)

<sup>1168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1169</sup> *Legatio pro Christ.* 10.

<sup>1170</sup> In Euseb. *H. E.* 5: 42.

<sup>1171</sup> In. Euseb. *H. E.* 5: 1.

<sup>1172</sup> *Ad Autolychum*, 2: 22.

<sup>1173</sup> *Adv. Hær.*, 2, 22: 5; 3, 1. Cf. Euseb. *H. E.* 5: 8.

<sup>1174</sup> Line 9 *et seq.*

<sup>1175</sup> *Adv. Græc.* 5, 7. It is, however, doubtful whether the Gospel Harmony composed by Tatian included the fourth Gospel: the title *Diatessaron* probably did not originate with Tatian himself (cf. Euseb. *H. E.* 4: 29; Theodoret, *Haeret. Fab.* 1: 20; Epiphanius, *Adv. Hær.* 46: 1; Fabricius *Cod. Apocr.* 1: 378).

<sup>1176</sup> Chaps. 6-9, 11. The passages of the Ignatian epistles in which allusions to the fourth Gospel have been thought to exist are of doubtful genuineness. The authority of Celsus, sometimes alleged, is of no account, since Celsus was a contemporary of Origen.

<sup>1177</sup> Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, 1, 3: 6; 3, 11: 7. Hippolytus, *Phil.*, 6, 2: 29; 7, 1: 22, 27.

<sup>1178</sup> Iren. *Adv. Hær.* 3, 11: 9.

<sup>1179</sup> Epiphanius, *Adv. Hær.* 1, 1: 3, 4, 28; 54: 1.

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of John is the one whose progress is the most apparent during the second century; <sup>1180</sup> Irenæus proceeded from the school of John, and between him and the Apostle there was only Polycarp. Now, Irenæus has not a doubt as to the authenticity of the fourth Gospel. Let us add that the first epistle attributed to John is, according to all appearances, by the same author as the fourth Gospel; <sup>1181</sup> the epistle seems to have been known to Polycarp; <sup>1182</sup> it was, it is said, cited by Papias; <sup>1183</sup> Irenæus recognised it as John's. <sup>1184</sup>

But if now we seek light in the reading of the work itself, we shall remark, first, that the author therein always speaks as an eye-witness. He wishes to pass for the Apostle John, and it is clearly seen that he writes in the interest of that Apostle. In every page he betrays the design of fortifying the authority of the son of Zebedee, of showing that he was the favourite of Jesus, and the most clear-sighted of his disciples; <sup>1185</sup> that on all solemn occasions (at the Supper, at Calvary, at the Tomb) he held the chief place. The relations of John with Peter, which were on the whole fraternal, although not excluding a certain rivalry; <sup>1186</sup> the hatred, on the other hand, of Judas, <sup>1187</sup>—a

<sup>1180</sup> Iren. *Epist. ad Florinum* (Euseb. *H. E.* 5: 26; 3: 39).

<sup>1181</sup> 1 John 1: 3, 5. The style of the epistle is very like that of the Gospel, with the same favourite turns of expression.

<sup>1182</sup> *Ad Phil.* 7: cf. 1 John 4: 2, 3; but this may be a mere coincidence, the two being of the same school and period. The genuineness of the epistle of Polycarp is disputed.

<sup>1183</sup> Eusebius, *H. E.* 3: 39. It would be strange if Papias, who did not know the Gospel, knew the epistle. Eusebius only says that Papias makes use of evidence taken from this epistle. All turns on a few words which Eusebius (a bad judge of a question in criticism) may have believed to be borrowed from the epistle.

<sup>1184</sup> *Adv. Hær.* 3, 16: 5, 8; cf. Euseb. *H. E.* 5: 8.

<sup>1185</sup> John 13: 23–26; 18: 15, 16; 19: 26; 20: 2–5; 21: 7, 20–24.

<sup>1186</sup> John 18: 15, 16; 20: 2–6; 21: 15–19 (cf. 1: 35, 40, 41).

<sup>1187</sup> John 6: 71; 12: 6; 13: 21–26.

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hatred probably anterior to the betrayal,—seem to break through here and there. At times one is constrained to believe that John in his old age read the gospel accounts then current and on the one hand remarked various inaccuracies,<sup>1188</sup> on the other was chafed at seeing that in the history of Christ he was not accorded an important enough place; that then he began to relate a multitude of things better known to him than to the others, with the intention of showing that in many instances, where Peter only was mentioned, he had figured with and before him.<sup>1189</sup> Even during the life of Jesus these petty sentiments of jealousy had been betrayed between the sons of Zebedee and the other disciples.<sup>1190</sup> Since the death of James, his brother, John remained the sole inheritor of the intimate memories which the two apostles, by common consent, had shared. Those might be preserved in the circle of John; and, as the ideas of the times in the matter of literary good faith differed much from ours, a disciple, or rather one of those numerous sectaries, already half-Gnostic, who from the end of the first century, in Asia Minor, began to modify greatly the idea of Christ,<sup>1191</sup> might be tempted to take the pen for the apostle, and to make on his own account a free revision of his Gospel. It would cost him no more to speak in the name of John than it cost the pious author of the Second Epistle of Peter to write a letter in the name of the latter. Identifying himself with the beloved disciple of Jesus, he espoused all his sentiments, even his littlenesses. Hence

<sup>1188</sup> The way in which "John the Elder" expressed himself in the Gospel of Mark (Papias in Euseb. *H. E.* 3: 39) implies a friendly view of it, or rather a sort of apology, seeming to imply that the disciples of John had a better view of their own on the same point.

<sup>1189</sup> Compare John 18: 15, 16 with Matt. 26: 58; John 20: 2-6 with Mark 16: 7. See also John 1: 35-39; 13: 24, 25; 21: 7, 20-24.

<sup>1190</sup> See *ante*, p. 116.

<sup>1191</sup> See Col. 2: 8, 18. 1 Tim. 1: 4; 6: 20. 2 Tim. 2: 18.



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this perpetual effort of the supposed author to recall that he is the last surviving eye-witness,<sup>1192</sup> and the pleasure he takes in relating circumstances which could be known only to him. Hence so many petty minute details which would fain pass as the commentaries of an annotator,—“it was the sixth hour;” “it was night;” “that man was called Malchus;” “they had lighted a fire of coals, for it was cold;” “the coat was without seam.”<sup>1193</sup> Hence, finally, the bad arrangement of the compilation, its irregular flow, the disjointedness of the earlier chapters,—so many inexplicable features if we go on the supposition that our Gospel is a mere theological treatise without historic value, yet perfectly comprehensible if we regard it as the recollections of an old man, arranged without the assistance of him from whom they proceeded,—sometimes of surprising freshness, and again strangely altered.

An important distinction, in fact, is to be remarked in the Gospel of John. This Gospel, on the one hand, presents a sketch of the life of Jesus which differs considerably from that of the Synoptics. On the other, it puts into the mouth of Jesus discourses whose tone, style, character, and doctrines have nothing in common with the sayings reported in the Synoptics. In this latter view the difference is such that one must make an out-and-out choice. If Jesus spoke as Matthew would have us believe, he could not have spoken in the manner represented by John. Between these two authorities no one has hesitated, or will ever hesitate. A thousand miles apart from the simple, disinterested, and impersonal tone of the Synoptics, the Gospel of John shows at every step the prepossession of the apologist, the mental reservations of the sectary, the desire to establish a point

<sup>1192</sup> John 1: 14; 19: 35; 21: 24 *et seq.* (Cf. 1 Ep. of John 1: 3, 5.)

<sup>1193</sup> Some of these points can have no real value: 1: 40; 2: 6; 4: 52; 5: 5, 19; 6: 9, 19; 21: 41.

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and to convict his adversaries.<sup>1194</sup> It was not by pretentious tirades, clumsy, badly written, appealing little to the moral sense, that Jesus founded his divine work. Even though Papias had not informed us that Matthew wrote the sayings of Jesus in their original tongue, the natural tone, the indescribable good faith, the incomparable charm of the discourses contained in the Synoptic Gospels, their profoundly Hebraic turn of thought, the analogies they present to the sayings of the Jewish doctors of the period, their perfect harmony with the Galilean nature,—all these characteristics, compared with the obscure Gnosticism and the distorted metaphysics which fill the discourses of John, speak loudly enough. This does not mean that there are not to be found in the discourses of John some marvellous gleams, some traits that really proceed from Jesus.<sup>1195</sup> But the mystical tone of these discourses corresponds in nothing to the character of the eloquence of Jesus, such as it is pictured to us in the Synoptics. A new spirit breathes through them; Gnosticism has already found a footing; the Galilean era of the kingdom of God is at an end; the hope of the near advent of Jesus is farther off; we enter the arid realm of metaphysics, the darkness of abstract dogma. The spirit of Jesus is not here; and if the son of Zebedee has indeed traced those pages, we must suppose that in writing them he had forgotten the Lake of Genesareth and the charming conversations he had heard upon its banks.

One circumstance, moreover, which proves indeed that the discourses reported by the fourth Gospel are not bits of history, but that they ought to be regarded as composi-

<sup>1194</sup> See, for example, chaps. 9 and 11; and remark especially the strange effect of such passages as 19: 35; 20: 31; 21: 20–25, contrasted with the absence of like reflections in the Synoptics.

<sup>1195</sup> For instance, 4: 1–24; 15: 12–17. Many sayings reported in the fourth Gospel are found also in the Synoptics (12: 46; 15: 20).

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tions designed to cover with the authority of Jesus certain doctrines dear to the author, is their complete harmony with the intellectual condition of Asia Minor at the time they were written. Asia Minor was then the theatre of a strange movement of syncretic philosophy; abundant germs of Gnosticism existed there already. Cerinthus, a contemporary of John, said that an *Æon* named *Christos* was united by baptism to the man named Jesus, and had separated from him on the cross.<sup>1196</sup> Some of the disciples of John appear to have drunk deeply from these strange springs. Can we affirm that the apostle himself had not been subject to the same influences,<sup>1197</sup> that he did not experience something like the change wrought in Paul, of which the Epistle to the Colossians is the principal witness?<sup>1198</sup> No, certainly not. It may be that after the crisis of 68 (the date of the Apocalypse), and of the year 70 (the ruin of Jerusalem), the old apostle, with an ardent and plastic soul, disabused of the belief of the near appearance of the Son of Man in the clouds, inclined toward the ideas that he found around him, many of which amalgamated quite well with certain Christian doctrines. In imputing these new ideas to Jesus, he would only follow a very natural leaning. Our recollections are, like everything else, transformable; the ideal of a person we have known changes as we change. Regarding Jesus as the incarnation of truth, John may well have attributed to him that which he himself had come to accept as the truth.

It is nevertheless much more probable that John himself had no part in this; that the change was made around him rather than by him, and doubtless after his death. The

<sup>1196</sup> Iren. *Adv. Hær.* 1, 26: 1.

<sup>1197</sup> The expressions *logos* (Rev. 19: 13) and *lamb of God*, common to the fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse, may be indications of this.

<sup>1198</sup> Compare Col. 1: 13-17, with the epistles to the Thessalonians, the oldest we have of Paul.

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long age of the apostle may have terminated in such a state of feebleness that he was in a measure at the mercy of those about him.<sup>1199</sup> A secretary might take advantage of this state to make one whom everybody called, *par excellence*, "the Elder" (ὁ πρεσβύτερος), speak in his own style. Certain parts of the fourth Gospel were added later; such is the whole of chapter 21,<sup>1200</sup> in which the author seems to have resolved to render homage to the Apostle Peter after his death, and to answer the objections which might be drawn or were already drawn from the death of John himself (ver. 21-23). Several other passages bear traces of erasures and corrections.<sup>1201</sup> Not being accounted as wholly the work of John, the book might well remain fifty years in obscurity. Little by little people got accustomed to it, and finished by accepting it. Even before it had become canonical, many may have made use of it as a book of some slight authority, yet very edifying.<sup>1202</sup> On the

<sup>1199</sup> Some traditions (Euseb. *H. E.* 3: 39) place beside him in his later years a namesake "John the Elder," who seems at times to have held the pen for him and acted as his substitute. In this view, the superscription ὁ πρεσβύτερος of the second and third epistles of John, which seem to us of the same hand with the first epistle, gives room for argument. Still, the existence of this "John the Elder" is not sufficiently established. It seems to have been imagined for the convenience of those who, through orthodox scruples, did not choose to ascribe the Apocalypse to the apostle (see p. 207, n. 675). The argument drawn by Eusebius for this hypothesis from a passage of Papias is not decisive. The words ἡ τὶ Ἰωάννης in this passage may have been interpolated. In this case the words πρεσβύτερος Ἰωάννης, from the pen of Papias, would indicate the Apostle John himself (Papias applies expressly the term πρεσβύτερος to the apostles: cf. 1 Pet. 6), and Irenæus would be right, as against Eusebius, in calling Papias a disciple of John. What confirms this conjecture is that Papias speaks of "John the Elder" as a direct disciple of Jesus.

<sup>1200</sup> Chap. 20: 30, 31, are evidently the original ending.

<sup>1201</sup> Chap. 4: 2 (cf. 3: 22); 7: 22; 12: 33, seem to be of the same hand with 21: 19.

<sup>1202</sup> Thus the Valentinians, who received it, and the author of the pseudo-Clementine Homilies, vary from it completely in reckoning the

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other hand, the contradictions it offered to the Synoptic Gospels, which were much more widely circulated, prevented its being taken into account in constructing the life of Jesus, such as it was imagined to be.

In this manner we may explain away the strange contradictions presented in the writings of Justin and in the pseudo-Clementine Homilies, in which are to be found traces of our Gospel, although certainly we do not place it upon the same footing as the Synoptics. Hence also those allusions, as they may be called, which are not direct quotations, made to it about the year 180; hence, finally, this singularity, that the fourth Gospel seems to emerge slowly from the church of Asia in the second century, first adopted by the Gnostics,<sup>1203</sup> but obtaining slight credence in the orthodox church (as we see from the controversy on the Passover), and then universally recognised. I am sometimes led to believe that Papias was thinking of the fourth Gospel when he set against the exact information in regard to the life of Jesus the long discourses and the singular precepts which others ascribe to him.<sup>1204</sup> Papias and the old Judæo-Christian party must have regarded such novelties as very reprehensible. This could not have been the only instance that a book at first deemed heretical forced the gates of the orthodox church, and became one of its rules of faith.

One thing, at least, I regard as very probable,—that the length of the ministry of Jesus. (Iren. *Adv. Hær.* 1, 3: 3; 2, 22: 1 *et seq.* *Hom. Clem.* 17: 19.)

<sup>1203</sup> Valentinus, Ptolemy, Heracleon, Basileides, Apelles, the Naäsenes [serpent-worshippers], the Peratæ (Iren. *Adv. Hær.* 1, 8: 5; 3, 11: 7. Origen in *Joann.* 6: 8 *et seq.* Epiph. *Adv. Hær.* 33: 3; see especially *Philosophumena*, 6 and 8.). It may be that, in crediting citations from the fourth Gospel to Basileides and Valentinus, the Fathers did not ascribe to these founders of schools the opinions which prevailed after them in these schools.

<sup>1204</sup> In Euseb. *H. E.* 3: 39.

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book was written before the year 100; that is to say, at a time when the Synoptics had not yet a complete canonicity. After this date it is impossible any longer to conceive that the author could free himself so completely from the framework of the Apostolic Memoirs. To Justin, and apparently to Papias, the synoptic framework constitutes the true and only plan of the life of Jesus. One who under an assumed name wrote about the year 120-130 a fictitious Gospel would have contented himself with treating in his own way the received version, as the apocryphal Gospels do, and not have reversed from top to bottom what were regarded as the essential lines of the life of Jesus. This is so true, that, from the second half of the second century, these contradictions became a serious difficulty in the hands of the *Alogi*, and obliged the defenders of the fourth Gospel to invent the most confused solutions.<sup>1205</sup> Nothing proves that the author of the fourth Gospel had, when writing, any of the Synoptic Gospels before his eyes.<sup>1206</sup> The striking similarities of his narrative to the other three Gospels as touching the Passion leads one to suppose that there was then for the Passion as well as for the Last Supper<sup>1207</sup> a fairly well established account, which people knew by heart.

It is impossible at a distance to have the key to all these singular problems, and we should undoubtedly meet many surprises if it were given to us to penetrate the secrets of that mysterious school of Ephesus, which seems more than once to have taken pleasure in obscure paths. But here is a capital test. Every person who sets himself to write the Life of Jesus without a decided opinion upon the

<sup>1205</sup> Epiphan. *Adv. Hær.* 1: 1; Euseb. *H. E.* 3: 24.

<sup>1206</sup> The concords of Mark 2: 9 and John 5: 8, 9; Mark 6: 37, and John 6: 7; Mark 14: 4 and John 12: 5; Luke 24: 1, 2, 12, and John 20: 1, 4-6, though singular, are sufficiently explained by memories.

<sup>1207</sup> 1 Cor. 11: 23-26.



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relative value of the Gospels, allowing himself to be guided solely by his feeling of the subject itself, would in many instances be induced to prefer the narrative of the fourth Gospel to that of the Synoptics. The last months of the life of Jesus especially are explained only by this Gospel; several details of the Passion, unintelligible in the Synoptics, assume both possibility and probability in the narrative of the fourth Gospel.<sup>1208</sup> On the other hand, I defy anybody to compose a rational Life of Jesus, who takes into account the discourses which the assumed John imputes to Jesus. This fashion of incessantly preaching himself and demonstrating his mission, this perpetual argumentation, this studied stage-effect, these long-reasonings that accompany each miracle, these stiff and awkward discourses, whose tone is so often false and unequal,<sup>1209</sup> could not be endured by a man of taste alongside the delightful utterances which, according to the Synoptics, constituted the soul of the teaching of Jesus. We have here evidently artificial essays,<sup>1210</sup> which represent to us the discourses of Jesus in the same way as the Dialogues of Plato set forth the conversations of Socrates. They resemble the variations of a musician improvising on his own account upon a given theme. The theme itself may be in some degree authentic; but in the execution the artist gives his fancy free scope. We perceive the artificial progression, the rhetoric, the prearranged plan.<sup>1211</sup> Let us add that the diction of Jesus is nowhere to be found in the discourses of which we speak. The expression "Kingdom of God,"

<sup>1208</sup> For example, that concerning the announcement of the treachery of Judas.

<sup>1209</sup> See, *e. g.*, 2: 25; 3: 32, 33, and the long discussions of chaps. 7, 8, and 9.

<sup>1210</sup> The writer often seems to seek occasion to insert discourses (chaps. 3, 5, 8, 13, 16).

<sup>1211</sup> For example, chap. 17.

so common with the Master,<sup>1212</sup> appears only once (3: 3, 5). On the other hand, the style of the discourses attributed to Jesus by the fourth Gospel offers the most complete analogy to that of the narrative parts of the same Gospel, and to that of the author of the epistles called John's. We see that the author of the fourth Gospel, in writing these discourses, followed not his recollections, but the somewhat monotonous movement of his own thought. Quite a new mystical language is displayed in them, language characterised by the frequent employment of the words "world," "truth," "life," "light," "darkness," resembling much less that of the Synoptics than that of the Book of Wisdom, Philo, and the Valentinians. If Jesus had ever spoken in that style, neither Hebrew nor Jewish, how does it come that, among his hearers, only a single one has so well kept the secret?

For the rest, literary history offers an example which presents a certain analogy to the historic phenomenon we have just described, and which serves to explain it. Socrates, who, like Jesus, did not write, is known to us through two of his disciples, Xenophon and Plato,—the former corresponding with the Synoptics in his clear, transparent, and impersonal style of composition; the latter, by his strong individuality, recalling the author of the fourth Gospel. In order to expound the Socratic teaching, must we follow the Dialogues of Plato or the Talks of Xenophon? In such a case doubt is not possible; every one sticks to the Talks and not to the Dialogues. Does Plato nevertheless teach us nothing concerning Socrates? In writing the biography of Socrates, would it be good criticism to neglect the Dialogues? Who would dare to maintain this?

Without pronouncing upon the main question, as to what

<sup>1212</sup> Besides the Synoptics, this is evident in the Acts, the Pauline epistles, and the Apocalypse.

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hand indited the fourth Gospel,—even if we were persuaded it was not that of the son of Zebedee,—we can admit, then, that this work possesses some title to be called the “Gospel according to John.” The historic sketch of the fourth Gospel is, in my opinion, the life of Jesus as it was known to the immediate circle of John. It is also my belief that this school was better acquainted with numerous outward circumstances of the life of the founder than the group whose recollections go to make up the Synoptic Gospels. Notably, in regard to the sojourns of Jesus at Jerusalem, it was in possession of facts which the other churches had not. “John the Elder,” who is probably not a different person from the Apostle John, regarded, it is said, the narrative of Mark as incomplete and confused; he even had a theory to explain the omissions of this narrative.<sup>1213</sup> Certain passages in Luke, which are a kind of an echo of the Johannine traditions,<sup>1214</sup> prove, moreover, that the traditions preserved by the fourth Gospel were not a thing entirely unknown to the rest of the Christian family.

These explanations will suffice, I think, to show the motives which in the course of my narrative have determined me to give the preference to this or that one of the four guides whom we follow in the life of Jesus. On the whole, I admit the four canonical Gospels as documents of good

<sup>1213</sup> Papias, *loc. cit.* (See above, p. 342.)

<sup>1214</sup> Such are the pardon of the sinful woman; the implied knowledge of the family at Bethany; the character of Martha, corresponding to *διηκόσκει* in John (12: 2); the idea given of the journeys of Jesus in Samaria, even (it would seem) of his several visits to Jerusalem; the curious likeness between the Lazarus of Luke and that of John; the incident of the woman who wiped the feet of Jesus with her hair; the idea that Jesus appeared at his trial before three authorities; the opinion indicated by the author of the third Gospel that several disciples were present at his crucifixion; the notices as to the part played by Annas in connection with Caiaphas; the apparition of the angel at Gethsemane (cf. John 12: 28, 29).

faith. All four belong to the century following the death of Jesus; but their historic value is very diverse. Matthew evidently merits especial confidence in respect of the discourses: here are the *Logia*, the very notes taken from a clear and lively memory of the teaching of Jesus. A sort of outburst at once mild and terrible, a divine force, if I may call it so, underlines these words, detaches them from the context, and to the critic renders them easily distinguishable. The person who undertakes the task of weaving out of the Gospel story a consecutive narrative has here an excellent touchstone. The actual words of Jesus, so to speak, reveal themselves: as soon as we touch them, in this chaos of traditions of unequal authority, we feel them throb with life; they translate themselves as it were spontaneously, and fit into the narrative of their own accord, standing out in high relief.

The narrative parts grouped in the first Gospel about this primitive nucleus have not the same authority. In them are to be found many legends of quite undefined outline, which proceeded from the piety of the second Christian generation.<sup>1215</sup> The accounts which Matthew has in common with Mark show faults of transcription which prove a slight acquaintance with Palestine.<sup>1216</sup> Many episodes are twice repeated, certain persons are duplicated, showing that different sources have been utilized and unskilfully mixed.<sup>1217</sup> The Gospel of Mark is much more firm, more precise, less weighted with circumstances added at a later date. Of the three Synoptics it is the one which has remained the

<sup>1215</sup> Especially chaps. 1, 2. See also 27: 3-10, 19, 51-53, 60; 28: 2-7, comparing Mark.

<sup>1216</sup> Comp. Matt. 15: 39 with Mark 8: 10. (See *Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des Inscr.*, etc., Aug. 17, 1866.)

<sup>1217</sup> Comp. Matt. 9: 27-31; 20: 29-34, with Mark 8: 22-26; 10: 46-52; Matt. 13: 28-34 with Mark 5: 1-20; Matt. 12: 38-42 with 16: 1-4; 9: 34 with 12: 24-28.

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most primitive, the most original,<sup>1218</sup> that to which were added the fewest later elements. Material details are given in Mark with a clearness which we should seek in vain in the other evangelists. He delights to report certain sayings of Jesus in Syro-Chaldean.<sup>1219</sup> His observations are most minute, and come, no doubt, from an eye-witness. There is nothing to disprove that this eye-witness, who evidently had followed Jesus, who had loved him and observed him very closely, and who had preserved a lively image of him, was the Apostle Peter himself, as is maintained by Papias.

As for the work of Luke, its historic value is manifestly inferior. It is a document at second hand. Its manner of narration is more matured. The sayings of Jesus are there more reflective, more sententious. Some sentences are exaggerated and distorted.<sup>1220</sup> Writing outside Palestine, and certainly after the siege of Jerusalem,<sup>1221</sup> the author indicates the places with less exactness than the other two Synoptics; he is too fond of representing the Temple as a house of prayer, where people go to perform their devotions;<sup>1222</sup> he does not speak of the Herodians; he softens details in order to bring the different narratives into closer agreement;<sup>1223</sup> he smooths over passages which had become embarrassing because of the more exalted idea which people around him had attained to in regard to the divinity of Jesus;<sup>1224</sup> he exaggerates the marvellous;<sup>1225</sup>

<sup>1218</sup> For example, compare Mark 15: 23 with Matt. 27: 34.

<sup>1219</sup> Chaps. 5: 41; 7: 34; 14: 36; 15: 34. Matthew shows this quality only in 27: 46.

<sup>1220</sup> Chap. 27: 26. The rules of apostleship (10: 4, 7) have an especially exaggerated tone.

<sup>1221</sup> Chaps. 19: 41, 43, 44; 21: 9, 20; 23: 29.

<sup>1222</sup> Chaps. 2: 37; 18: 10-13; 24: 53.

<sup>1223</sup> Chap. 4: 16; comp. note 3 on chap. 2 (below).

<sup>1224</sup> Chap. 3: 23; Mark 13: 32, and Matt. 24: 36 are omitted.

<sup>1225</sup> Chaps. 4: 14; 22: 43, 44.

he commits errors of chronology<sup>1226</sup> and of typography;<sup>1227</sup> he omits the Hebraic glosses;<sup>1228</sup> he appears to know little of Hebrew;<sup>1229</sup> he does not quote a word of Jesus in that language; he calls all the localities by their Greek names; he corrects at times in a clumsy manner the sayings of Jesus.<sup>1230</sup> We perceive in the author a compiler, a man who has not himself seen the witnesses, who labours at the texts, and permits himself great violences in order to make them agree. Luke had probably under his eyes the original narrative of Mark and the *Logia* of Matthew. But he treats them with great freedom: at times he runs two anecdotes or two parables together to make one;<sup>1231</sup> sometimes he divides one so as to make two.<sup>1232</sup> He interprets the documents according to his own mind; he has not the absolute impartiality of Matthew and Mark. We might add, con-

<sup>1226</sup> Regarding the taxing of Quirinius (Cyrenius), the revolt of Theudas, and perhaps the mention of Lysanias,—though as to this last his accuracy may be defended. (See *Mission de Phénicie*, p. 347 *et seq.*; *Corp. inscr. Gr.* No. 4521 with the *addenda*. Josephus, *Antiq.* 18, 6: 10; 19, 5: 1; 20, 7: 1; *Bell. Jud.* 2, 11: 5; 12: 8.)

<sup>1227</sup> Comp. Luke 24: 13 with Josephus, *Wars*, 7, 6: 6 (ed. Dindorf); chap. 1: 39 is also suspected of error.

<sup>1228</sup> Comp. Luke 1: 34 with Matt. 1: 21; Luke 20: 46 with Matt. 23: 7, 8. Luke avoids the words *abba*, *rabbi*, *corbona*, *corban*, *raca*, *Boanerges*.

<sup>1229</sup> Jerome *In Isaiam*, 6 (Opp. ed. Martianay, 3: 63, 64). The Hebraisms of his style, with certain Jewish traits (such as Acts 1: 12), came probably from persons he talked with, books he read, and documents he followed.

<sup>1230</sup> For example, *ἐργων* (Matt. 11: 19) becomes in Luke (7: 35) *τέκνων*, their reading, by a sort of reflex action, has found its way into most MSS. of Matthew.

<sup>1231</sup> For example, 19: 12–27, where the parable of the talents is confused (ver. 12, 14, 15, 27) with one regarding rebel subjects. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus (chap. 16) contains features that have little to do with the main subject (the sores, the dogs, and ver. 23–27).

<sup>1232</sup> Thus the feast at Bethany yields him two accounts (7: 36–48; 10: 38–42). So with the discourses: thus Matt. 23 is found in Luke 11: 39–41; 20: 46, 47.



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cerning his tastes and personal tendencies, that he is a very exact devotee; <sup>1233</sup> he holds that Jesus has accomplished all the Jewish rites; <sup>1234</sup> he is a passionate democrat and Ebionite: that is to say, much opposed to property, and is persuaded that the poor will soon have their revenge; <sup>1235</sup> he is specially partial to the anecdotes which put into relief the conversion of sinners and the exaltation of the humble; <sup>1236</sup> he frequently modifies the ancient traditions so as to give them this turn. <sup>1237</sup> In his first pages he includes legends touching the infancy of Jesus, told with the long amplifications, the canticles, and the conventional proceedings, which constitute the essential feature of the apocryphal Gospels. Finally, in the account of the last hours of Jesus, he introduces some circumstances full of a tender sentiment, as well as certain sayings of Jesus of rare beauty, <sup>1238</sup> not found in the more authentic narratives, in which can be detected the work of legend. Luke probably borrowed them from a later collection, in which the chief aim was to excite sentiments of piety.

A great reserve was naturally required in regard to a document of this nature. It would have been as little scientific to neglect it as to employ it without discrimination. Luke had under his eyes originals which we no longer

<sup>1233</sup> Chaps. 23: 56; 24: 53. Acts 1: 12.

<sup>1234</sup> Chap. 2: 21, 22, 39, 41, 42 (this is an Ebionitish trait). See *Philosophumena*, 7, 6: 34.

<sup>1235</sup> As in the parable of Dives and Lazarus. See also 6: 20-23, 24-28 (comparing the milder form in Matt. 5: 3-12); 12: 13-15; 16: (throughout); 22: 35. Acts 2: 44, 55; 5: 1-11.

<sup>1236</sup> The woman who anoints the feet of Jesus, the penitent thief on the cross, the pharisee and publican, the prodigal son.

<sup>1237</sup> Thus the woman who anoints the feet becomes, in his account, a penitent sinner.

<sup>1238</sup> Jesus weeping over Jerusalem, the bloody sweat, meeting with the holy women, the penitent thief, etc. The words spoken to the "daughters of Jerusalem" (17: 28, 29) can hardly have been thought of till after the siege of A.D. 70.

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have. He is less an evangelist than a biographer of Jesus,—a “harmonist,” a reviser, after the manner of Marcion and Tatian. But he is a biographer of the first century, a divine artist who, apart from the information he has extracted from more ancient sources, shows us the character of the founder with a felicity of touch, an inspired grasp, and a sharpness of relief which the two other Synoptics do not possess. His Gospel is the one which possesses most charm in the reading; for, not to mention the incomparable beauty of its subject-matter, he adds an element of art and skill which singularly enhances the effect of the portrait without seriously marring its truth.

To sum up, we are warranted in saying that the synoptic compilation has passed through three stages,—first, the original documentary stage (λόγια of Matthew, λεχθέντα ἢ πραχθέντα of Mark), primary compilations no longer in existence; second, the stage of simple amalgamation, in which the original documents were thrown together without regard to literary form, and without betraying any personal traits on the part of the authors (the present Gospels of Matthew and Mark); third, the careful composition and studied compilation in which we are conscious of an effort made to reconcile the different versions (the Gospel of Luke, the Gospels of Marcion, Tatian, etc.). The Gospel of John, as we have said, is a composition of another order, and stands wholly by itself.

It will be observed that I have made no use of the apocryphal gospels. In no sense should these compositions be placed on the same footing as the canonical gospels. They are tiresome and puerile amplifications, having almost always the canonical documents for a base, and never adding anything to them of any value. On the other hand, I have been most careful in collecting the shreds of ancient gospels preserved by the Fathers of the Church, which

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formerly existed simultaneously with the canonical but are now lost,—such as that according to the Hebrews, that according to the Egyptians, those attributed to Justin, Marcion, and Tatian.<sup>1239</sup> The first two possess especial importance, since they were composed in Aramean, like the *Logia* of Matthew, appearing to have formed a variation of the Gospel attributed to that apostle; and because they were adopted by the Ebionites,—that is to say, those small Christian sects of Batanæa which preserved the use of the Syro-Chaldaic tongue, and appear to have continued, in a sense, the lineage of Jesus. But it must be owned that in the condition they have come down to us they are inferior, in critical authority, to the compilation of Matthew which we possess.

It will now, I presume, be understood what sort of historic value I put upon the Gospels. They are neither biographies after the manner of Suetonius, nor fictitious legends after the manner of Philostratus; they are legendary biographies. I should class them frankly with the legends of the saints, the Lives of Plotinus, Proclus, Isidore, and other compositions of the same sort, in which historical truth and the desire to present models of virtue are combined in various degrees. Inexactness—a trait common to all popular compositions—is especially to be observed in them. Let us suppose that forty or fifty years ago three or four old soldiers of the empire had set themselves, each by himself, to write a Life of Napoleon from their own memory. It is clear that their narratives would present numerous errors, great discordances. One of them would place Wagram before Marengo; another would boldly write that Napoleon ousted the government of Robespierre from the Tuileries; a third would omit expeditions of the highest

<sup>1239</sup> For further details see Michel Nicolas, *Études sur les Évangiles apocryphes* (Paris, Lévy, 1886).

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importance. But one thing would certainly result from these simple narratives with a high degree of truth,—that is, the character of the hero, the impression he made around him. In this sense, such popular narratives would be worth more than a formal and official history. The same can also be said of the Gospels. Bent solely on bringing out strongly the excellency of the Master, his miracles, his teaching, the evangelists manifest entire indifference to everything that is not of the very spirit of Jesus. The contradictions in respect of time, place, and persons were regarded as insignificant; for the higher the degree of inspiration attributed to the word of Jesus, the less was ascribed to the compilers themselves. These regarded themselves only as simple scribes, and cared but for one thing,—to omit nothing of what they knew.<sup>1240</sup>

A certain share of preconceived ideas must without doubt have been mingled in these recollections. Several narratives, especially in Luke, are invented in order to bring out more vividly certain traits of the personality of Jesus. This personality itself underwent alteration every day. Jesus would be a phenomenon unique in history if, with the part which he played, he had not soon become transfigured. The legend respecting Alexander had its birth before the generation of his companions in arms was extinct; that respecting Saint Francis of Assisi began in his lifetime. A rapid work of transformation went on in the same manner in the twenty or thirty years which followed the death of Jesus, and stamped upon his biography the absolute traits of an ideal legend. Death makes perfect the most perfect man; it renders him faultless to those who have loved him. At the same time with the wish to paint the Master, came likewise the desire to explain him. Many anecdotes were devised to prove that the prophecies regarded as messianic

<sup>1240</sup> See the passage from Papias, before cited.

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had been fulfilled in him. But this procedure, whose importance is undeniable, would not suffice to explain everything. No Jewish work of the time gives a series of prophecies, precisely labelled, which the Messiah was destined to fulfil. Many of the messianic allusions prominent in the evangelists are so subtle, so indirect, that it is impossible to believe they all had relation to a generally admitted doctrine. Sometimes they reasoned thus: "The Messiah was to do such a thing; now, Jesus is the Messiah; therefore Jesus has done such a thing." Sometimes they reasoned inversely: "Such a thing has happened to Jesus; now, Jesus is the Messiah; therefore such a thing was to happen to the Messiah."<sup>1241</sup> Too simple explanations are always false, when it is our task in hand to analyse the texture of those profound creations of popular sentiment which baffle all theories by their wealth and infinite variety.

It is scarcely necessary to say that with such documents, in order to present only what is indisputable, we must keep to the main lines. In almost all ancient histories, even in those which are much less legendary than these, detail gives rise to infinite doubts. When we have two accounts of the same fact, it is extremely rare that the two exactly agree. Is not this a reason, when we have only one, for falling into many a perplexity? We may say that among the anecdotes, the discourses, the celebrated sayings reported by the historians, there is not one strictly authentic. Were there stenographers to take down these fleeting words? Was there an annalist always present to note the gestures, the manner, the emotions of the actors? Let us try to attain to the truth as to the way in which such or such a contemporary fact took place: we shall not succeed. Two accounts of the same event given by two eye-witnesses differ essentially. Must we, then, reject all the colouring of the

<sup>1241</sup> See, for example, John 19: 23, 24.

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narratives, and confine ourselves to recording the bare facts only? That would be to suppress history. Of course, I am well aware that, if we except certain short axioms easily fixed in memory, not one of the discourses reported by Matthew is literally correct: there is hardly one of our stenographic reports which is so. I willingly admit that that marvellous account of the Passion embraces a multitude of trifling inaccuracies. Would it, however, be writing the history of Jesus to omit those discourses which exhibit to us in such a vivid manner the nature of his religious teaching, and to limit ourselves to saying, with Josephus and Tacitus, that "he was put to death by the order of Pilate at the instigation of the priests"? That would be, in my opinion, a kind of inaccuracy worse than that to which one exposes himself when admitting the details supplied by the texts. These details are not true to the letter, but they are truth of a higher order; they are truer than the naked truth, in the sense that they are truth rendered expressive and articulate, and raised to the height of an idea.

I beg those who think that I have placed an undue reliance on narratives which are in great part legendary, to take note of the observation I have just made. To what would the life of Alexander be reduced, if it were limited to that which is materially certain? Even traditions partly erroneous contain a portion of truth which history may not pass over. No one has blamed M. Sprenger because, in writing the Life of Mahomet, he set much store by the *hadith*, or oral traditions concerning the prophet, and often imputed to his hero words which are only known through this source. The traditions respecting Mahomet, nevertheless, have no historical value higher than the discourses and narratives which compose the Gospels. They were written between the year 50 and the year 140 of the Hegira.



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When the history of the Jewish schools in the ages which immediately preceded and followed the birth of Christianity shall be written, no one will make any scruple of attributing to Hillel, Shammai, or Gamaliel the maxims imputed to them by the Mishna and the Gemara, although these great compilations were formed many centuries after the time of the doctors just mentioned.

Those, on the other hand, who believe that history ought to consist in merely reproducing without comment the documents which have come down to us, are desired to take notice that such a course is not allowable. The four principal documents are in flagrant contradiction with one another; Josephus, moreover, sometimes corrects them all. We must make our choice. To assert that an event cannot take place in two ways at once, or in an absurd manner, is not to impose an *à priori* philosophy upon history. Because we have several different versions of the same fact, or because credulity has mixed with all these versions fabulous circumstances, the historian must not conclude that the fact is not a fact; but he ought, in such a case, to be very cautious, —to examine the texts, and to proceed by induction. There is especially one class of narratives to which this principle must necessarily be applied,—narratives of the supernatural. To seek to explain these narratives, or to treat them as legends, is not to mutilate facts in the name of theory; it is to begin with the study of the very facts themselves. None of the miracles which abound in the old histories took place under scientific conditions. Observation, which has not once been falsified, teaches us that miracles never take place save in times and countries in which they are believed, and in presence of persons disposed to believe them. No miracle ever took place in presence of a gathering of men capable of testing the miraculous character of the event. Neither common people nor men of the world are equal to

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this. It requires great precautions and long habit of scientific research. In our own days, have we not seen all sorts of people become dupes of the grossest frauds or of childish illusions? Marvellous facts, attested by the populations of small towns, have, thanks to closer investigation, been condemned.<sup>1242</sup> Since it is proved that no contemporary miracle will bear discussion, is it not probable that the miracles of the past, which were all performed in popular gatherings, would equally display their share of illusion if it were possible to criticise them in detail?

It is not, then, in the name of this or that philosophy, but in the name of unbroken experience, that we banish miracle from history. We do not say, "Miracle is impossible." We say, "So far, no miracle has ever been proved." If to-morrow a wonder-worker were to come forward with credentials sufficiently weighty to be discussed; if he were to announce that he was able, say, to raise the dead,—what would be done? A commission, composed of physiologists, physicists, chemists, persons trained in historical criticism, would be named. That commission would select the corpse, would assure itself that the death was indeed real, would designate the room in which the experiment should be made, would arrange a whole series of precautions, so as to leave no hold for doubt. If under such conditions the revival should take place, a probability almost equal to certainty would be established. As, however, it ought always to be possible to repeat an experiment,—to do over again that which has been done once,—and as, in the case of miracle, there can be no question of facility or difficulty, the wonder-worker would be invited to reproduce his marvellous feat under different circumstances, upon other bodies, in another place. If the miracle should succeed every time, two things

<sup>1242</sup> See the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, Sept. 10 and Nov. 11, 1851; May 28, 1857.

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would be proved,—first, that it takes place in a realm of supernatural events; second, that the power of bringing them to pass belongs, or is delegated to, certain individuals. But who does not see that a miracle never took place under these conditions; that hitherto the miracle-worker has always chosen the subject of the experiment, chosen the surroundings, chosen the public; that, moreover, it is the people themselves who most often, because of their invincible desire to see something divine in great events and great men, create afterwards the marvellous legends? Until the order of things changes, we maintain it, then, as a principle of historical criticism, that a supernatural account cannot be admitted as such; that it always implies credulity or imposture; that it is the historian's duty to explain it, and search out what share of truth or of error it may conceal.

Such are the rules which have been followed in the composition of this work. In the reading of the texts, I have been able to combine with it an important source of information,—the view of the scenes where the events occurred. The scientific mission, having for its object the exploration of ancient Phœnicia, which I directed in 1860 and 1861,<sup>1243</sup> led me to reside on the frontiers of Galilee, and to travel thither frequently. I have traversed, in every sense of the term, the Gospel region; I have visited Jerusalem, Hebron, and Samaria; scarcely any important locality in the history of Jesus has escaped me. All this history, which seems at a distance to float in the clouds of an unreal world, took thus a form, a solidity, which astonished me. The striking agreement of the texts and the places, the marvellous harmony of the Gospel idea with the country which served it as a framework, were to me a revelation. Before my eyes I had a fifth Gospel, torn but still legible; and from that

<sup>1243</sup> The work containing the results of this mission was published in 1864.

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time, through the narratives of Matthew and Mark, I saw, instead of an abstract being who might be said never to have existed, an admirable human figure living and moving. During the summer, having to go up to Ghazir, in the Lebanon, to take a little repose, I fixed, in rapid sketches, the picture as it had appeared to me; and from these resulted this history. When a cruel affliction came to hasten my departure, I had only a few pages to write. In this manner the book was composed near the very places where Jesus was born and lived. Since my return,<sup>1244</sup> I have laboured unceasingly to complete and arrange in detail the rough sketch which I had hastily written in a Maronite cabin, with five or six volumes around me.

Many will perhaps regret the biographical form which my work has thus taken. When, for the first time, I conceived the idea of writing a history of the origins of Christianity, my intention was, in fact, to produce a history of doctrines, in which men would hardly have a place. Jesus was to be barely named; I was especially bent on showing how the ideas developed under cover of his name took root and covered the world. But I have since learned that history is not a simple play of abstractions; that in it men are more than doctrines. It was not a particular theory of justification and redemption that caused the Reformation: it was Luther and Calvin. Parseeism, Hellenism, Judaism, might have combined under all manner of forms; the doctrines of the Resurrection and of the Word might have gone on developing for ages without producing that grand, unique, and fruitful fact which is called Christianity. That fact is the work of Jesus, of Paul, of the Apostles. To write the history of Jesus, of Paul, and of the Apostles is to write the history of the origins of Christianity. Earlier

<sup>1244</sup> My return was in October, 1861; the first edition of this book appeared in June, 1863.

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movements do not belong to our subject except as serving to explain these extraordinary men, who, naturally, could not have existed apart from that which preceded them.

In such an effort, to make the great souls of the past live again, some degree of divination and of conjecture must be permitted. A great life is an organic whole, which cannot be exhibited by the mere heaping together of small facts. A profound sentiment must embrace the whole, and make its unity. The artist method in such a subject is a good guide; the exquisite tact of a Goethe would find a way to apply it. The essential condition of the creations of art is to form a living system, all whose parts are mutually dependent and connected. In histories of this kind, the great indications that we hold to the truth is to have succeeded in combining the texts in such a fashion as to constitute a logical and probable narrative, in which nothing shall be out of tune. The secret laws of life, of the progression of organic products, of the minute shadings of tone, ought to be consulted at each moment; for what is required to be reproduced is not the material circumstance, which it is impossible to verify: it is the soul itself of history. What must be sought after is not the petty certainty of minutiae: it is the correctness of the general sentiment, the truth of colour. Each detail which departs from the rules of classic narration ought to warn us to be on our guard; for the fact which requires to be related has been conformed to the necessity of things, natural and harmonious. If we do not succeed in rendering it such by our narrative, it is only because we have not attained to seeing it aright. Suppose that, in restoring the Minerva of Phidias according to the texts, we produced a composition at once dry, raw, artificial: what must we conclude? Only one thing,—the texts lack an appreciative interpretation; we

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must woo them gently, until they can be made to join and furnish a whole in which all the parts are happily blended. Should we then be sure of having, feature by feature, the Greek statue? No; but we should not, at least, have the caricature of it: we should have the general spirit of the work,—one of the forms in which it might have existed.

This sentiment of a living organism we have not hesitated to take as our guide in the general working out of the narrative. The reading of the Gospels would be sufficient to prove that the authors, although conceiving a very true idea of the life of Jesus, have not been guided by very rigorous chronological data. Papias, moreover, expressly tells us this, and bases his opinion upon evidence which seems to emanate from the Apostle John himself.<sup>1245</sup> The expressions, *at this time, after that, then, and it came to pass*, etc., are mere transitions designed to connect different narratives with one another. To leave all the information furnished by the Gospels in the disorder in which tradition gives it, would no more be writing the history of Jesus than it would be writing the history of a celebrated man to give pell-mell the letters and anecdotes of his youth, his old age, and his maturity. The Koran, which presents to us, in the loosest manner possible, fragments of the different epochs in the life of Mahomet, has discovered its secret to ingenious criticism; the chronological order in which the fragments were composed has been detected in such a way as to leave little room for doubt. Such a rearrangement is much more difficult in the Gospel, owing to the public life of Jesus having been shorter and less eventful than the life of the founder of Islam. Still, the attempt to find a thread which shall serve as a guide through this labyrinth ought not to be taxed with gratuitous subtlety. There is no great abuse of hypothesis in premising

<sup>1245</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.* 3: 39.



## INTRODUCTION

that a religious founder begins by keeping close to the moral aphorisms which are already in circulation, and to the practices which are in vogue; that, as he advances and gets full possession of his idea, he delights in a kind of calm and poetic eloquence, apart from all controversy, sweet and free as pure feeling; that, as he gradually warms, he is kindled by opposition, and ends with polemics and strong invectives. Such are the periods plainly distinguishable in the Koran. The order which, with extremely fine tact, is adopted by the Synoptics, supposes a similar course. If we read Matthew attentively, we shall find in the arrangement of the discourses a gradation very like that just indicated. There will be noticed also a reserve in the turns of expression which are made use of when it is desired to show the progress of the ideas of Jesus. The reader may, if he prefers, see in the divisions adopted in this respect only the breaks indispensable for the methodical exposition of a profound and complicated thought.

If love for a subject can serve to give an understanding of it, it will also, I hope, be recognized that in this I have not been wanting. To construct the history of a religion, it is necessary, first, to have believed it,—without this, we should not be able to understand why it has charmed and satisfied the human conscience; in the second place, to believe it no longer in an absolute manner, since absolute faith is incompatible with honest history. But love persists apart from faith. By not attaching one's self to any of the forms which captivate the adoration of men, one does not renounce the appreciation of that which they contain of good and of beautiful. No transitory apparition exhausts the Divinity: God had revealed himself before Jesus; God will reveal himself after Jesus. Profoundly unequal, and so much the more divine as they are grander and more spontaneous, manifestations of the God who hides himself

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in the depth of the human conscience are all of the same order. Jesus cannot, then, belong solely to those who call themselves his disciples. He is the common honour of all who carry a human heart. His glory does not consist in being banished from history; we render him a truer worship in showing that all history is incomprehensible without him.

# PREFACE

TO THE THIRTEENTH EDITION

The twelve earlier editions of this work differ from one another only in trifling changes. The present edition, on the contrary, has been revised and corrected with the greatest care. During the four years since the book appeared, I have laboured incessantly to improve it. The numerous criticisms to which it has given rise have rendered the task in some respects an easy one. I have read all important criticisms. I believe I can conscientiously affirm that not once have the outrage and the calumny which they breathe hindered me from deriving profit from the just observations which those criticisms might contain. I have weighed everything, tested everything. If people should wonder why I have not sometimes answered fully the censures which have been made with such extreme assurance, as if the errors alleged had been proved, I reply that it is not because I did not know of these censures, but because it was impossible for me to accept them. In such cases I have generally added in a note the texts or the considerations which have kept me from changing my opinion, or else by some slight change of expression I have endeavoured to show wherein lay the error of my critics. These notes, though very brief and doing little more than point out the original sources, are still enough to show the intelligent reader the reasonings that have guided me in the composition of my text.

To answer in detail all the charges that have been brought against me would require a volume three or four times the size of this. I should have been obliged to repeat

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things which have already been well said, even in French. I must have entered into religious controversy,—a thing that I absolutely forbid myself. I should have had to speak of myself, a thing I never do. I write in order to put my ideas before those who seek the truth. As for those persons who in the interest of their belief must have it that I am an ignoramus, a liar, or a man of bad faith, I make no attempt to modify their opinion. If that opinion is necessary for the peace of mind of certain pious people, I should feel a genuine scruple at disabusing them.

The controversy, moreover, if I had entered upon it, must have led me very often to points quite outside historical criticism. The objections made against me have come from two opposing parties. One set has been addressed to me by free-thinkers, who do not believe in the supernatural,<sup>1246</sup> nor, consequently, in the inspiration of the sacred books; or else by theologians of the liberal Protestant school, who have come to take such broad doctrinal views that the rationalist can readily arrive at an understanding with them. These adversaries and I find ourselves on common ground; we start with the same principles; we can discuss according to the rules followed in all questions of history, philology, and archæology. As to the refutations of my book (and these are much the most numerous) which have been made by orthodox theologians, both Catholic and Protestant, who believe in the supernatural and in the sacred character of the books of the Old and New Testaments, they all involve a fundamental misapprehension. If miracle has any reality, this book is but a tissue of errors. If the Gospels are inspired books, and true conse-

<sup>1246</sup> By this word I always mean the *special* supernatural act, miracle, or the divine intervention for a particular end; not the general supernatural force, the hidden Soul of the Universe, the ideal, source, and final cause of all movements in the system of things.

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quently to the letter, from beginning to end, I have been wholly in the wrong in not contenting myself with piecing together the broken fragments of the four texts, as the Harmonists do, sure of constructing thus a whole once most redundant and most contradictory. If, on the contrary, miracle is a thing inadmissible, then I am right in regarding the books which contain miraculous tales as history mixed with fiction, as legends full of inaccuracies, errors, and systematic shifts. If the Gospels are like other books, I am right in treating them in the same manner as the student of Greek, Arabian, or Hindoo lore treats the legendary documents which he studies. Criticism knows no infallible texts; its first principle is to admit the possibility of error in the text which it examines. Far from being accused of scepticism, I ought to be classed with the moderate critics, since, instead of rejecting in the lump documents damaged by so much alloy, I try to get something historical out of them by cautious modifications of the story.

Let no one assert that to put the question in such a manner implies that we take for granted beforehand what is to be proved in detail,—namely, that the miracles related by the Gospels had no reality; that the Gospels are not books written by help of the Divinity. Those two negations do not with us result from our method of criticism; they are anterior to it. They are the outcome of an experience which has never been belied. Miracles are things which never happen. Only credulous people think they see them: you cannot cite a single one which has taken place in presence of witnesses competent to give a clear account of it. No special intervention of the Divinity, whether in the composition of a book, or in any event whatever, has been proved. In the very fact that one admits the supernatural, he is so far outside the province of science; he accepts an explanation which is non-scientific, an expla-

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nation which is set aside by the astronomer, the physicist, the chemist, the geologist, the physiologist,—one which the historian also must set aside. We reject the supernatural for the same reason that we reject the existence of centaurs and hippogriffs; and this reason is, that nobody has ever seen them. It is not because it has been proved to me beforehand that the evangelists do not merit absolute credence, that I reject the miracles which they relate. It is because they tell of miracles that I say, "The Gospels are legends; they may contain history, but certainly all that they set forth is not historical."

It is hence impossible that the orthodox believer and the rationalist, who denies the supernatural, can help each other much in such discussions. In the eyes of theologians, the Gospels and the contents of the Bible in general are books like no others,—books more historic than the best of histories, inasmuch as they contain no error. To the rationalist, on the contrary, the Gospels are texts to which his very business is to apply the ordinary rules of criticism. We are in this respect like Arabic scholars in presence of the Koran and the *hadith*; like Hindoo students in presence of the Vedas and the Buddhist books. Do our Arabic scholars regard the Koran as infallible? Do we accuse them of falsifying history when they relate the origins of Islamism differently from the Mussulman theologians? Do our orientalist hold the legendary life of Buddha to be an authentic biography?

How can we come to an understanding when we set out from opposite principles? All rules of criticism assume that a document subjected to examination has but a relative value; that it may be in error, and corrected by some better document. A classical scholar, persuaded that all books bequeathed to us from the past are the work of men, does not hesitate to challenge the texts when they contradict



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one another; when they set forth absurd statements, or those formally disproved by documents of greater authority. The orthodox believer, on the contrary, sure in advance that his sacred books do not contain an error or a contradiction, is party to the most violent tactics, to expedients the most desperate, to get out of difficulties. Orthodox exegesis is, in this way, a tissue of subtilties. A single forced interpretation may be true; but a thousand such subtilties at once cannot be true. If there were in Tacitus or Polybius errors so pronounced as those committed by Luke regarding Quirinius and Theudas, we should say that Tacitus and Polybius were wrong. Reasonings which we would not allow if the question were one of Greek or Latin literature—hypotheses which a Boissonade, or even a Rollin, would never think of—are held to be plausible when one sets himself to defend a sacred writer.

Hence it is the orthodox apologist that is guilty of bad logic when he reproaches the rationalist with falsifying history, because he does not accept word for word the documents which orthodoxy holds to be sacred. Because a fact is written down, it does not follow that it is true. The miracles of Mahomet are down in writing, as well as those of Jesus; and certainly the Arabian biographies of Mahomet—that of Ibn-Hashim, for example—have a much more historical character than the Gospels. Do we on this account admit the miracles of Mahomet? We follow Ibn-Hashim, with more or less confidence, when we have no reasons to differ from him. But when he relates to us things perfectly incredible, we make no difficulty about abandoning him. Certainly, if we had four lives of Buddha, partly fabulous, and as irreconcilable with one another as the four Gospels, and if a scholar essayed to relieve the four Buddhist narratives of their contradictions, we should not accuse that scholar of charging the texts with

falsehood. It might be well should he attempt to reconcile discordant passages, or seek a compromise, a sort of neutral tale, a narrative to contain nothing impossible, in which opposing testimony should be balanced and treated with as little violence as possible. If, after that, the Buddhists believed in a lie, in the falsification of history, we should have a right to say to them: "The question here is not one of history; and if we must at times discard your texts, it is the fault of those texts which contain things impossible of belief, and which, moreover, contradict one another."

At the bottom of all discussion on such matters is the question of the supernatural. If miracle and inspiration of certain books are actual facts, our method is false and wrong. If miracle and the inspiration of such books are beliefs without reality, our method is the right one. Now, the question of the supernatural is settled for us with absolute certainty by this simple reason, that there is no room for belief in a thing of which the world can offer no experimental test. We do not believe in a miracle, just as we do not believe in ghosts, in the devil, in sorcery, or in astrology. Have we any need to refute step by step the long reasonings of astrology in order to deny that the stars influence human events? No. For this the purely negative evidence is enough—quite as convincing as the best direct proof—that such an influence has never been established.

God forbid that we should be unmindful of the services which theologians have rendered to science! Investigation and verification of the texts which serve as authorities for this history have often been the work of orthodox theologians. The labour of criticism has been the task of liberal theologians. But there is one thing that a theologian can never be,—I mean, an historian. History is essentially

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disinterested. The historian has but one care,—art and truth. These two are inseparable: art guards the secret of the laws most closely related to truth. The theologian has an interest,—his dogma. Minimise that dogma as much as you will; it is still, to the artist and the critic, an insupportable burden. The orthodox theologian may be compared to a caged bird: every movement natural to it is forbidden. The liberal theologian is a bird, some of whose wing-feathers have been clipped. You think him master of himself; and in fact he is so until the moment he seeks to take his flight. Then it is seen that he is not completely the child of the air. Let us say it boldly: critical studies relating to the origin of Christianity will not have said their last word until they are cultivated in a purely secular and unprofessional spirit, after the method of Greek, Arabic, or Sanscrit scholars,—men strangers to all theology, who think neither of edifying nor of scandalising nor of defending nor of refuting dogmas.

Day and night, I presume to say, I have reflected on these questions, which ought to be discussed without any other prejudices than those that make the very essence of reason itself. The weightiest of all, unquestionably, is that of the historic value of the fourth Gospel. Those who have never changed their view on such problems give room for the belief that they have not comprehended the whole difficulty. We may range the opinions on this Gospel into four classes, of which the following is the abridged expression:—

First opinion: “The fourth Gospel was written by the Apostle John, the son of Zebedee. The statements contained in that Gospel are all true; the discourses which the author puts into the mouth of Jesus were actually spoken by Jesus.” This is the orthodox opinion. From the point of view of rational criticism, it is wholly untenable.

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Second opinion: "The fourth Gospel is in substance by the Apostle John, although it may have been revised and retouched by his disciples. The facts related in this Gospel are direct traditions in regard to Jesus. The discourses are often free compositions, expressing only the manner in which the author conceived the mind of Jesus." This is the opinion of Ewald, and in some respects that of Lücke, Weisse, and Reuss. It is the opinion which I adopted in the first edition of this work.

Third opinion: "The fourth Gospel is not the work of the Apostle John. It was attributed to him by some disciple of his about the year 100. The discourses are almost entirely fictitious; but the narrative parts contain valuable traditions, ascending in part to the Apostle John." This is the opinion of Weizsäcker and of Michael Nicolas. It is the opinion which I now hold.

Fourth opinion: "The fourth Gospel is in no sense the work of the Apostle John. Neither the facts nor the discourses reported in it are historical. It is a work of the imagination, and in part allegorical, which came to birth about the year 150; and the author's purpose in it is not to recount the actual life of Jesus, but to propagate the idea which he has himself formed of Jesus." Such is, with some variations, the opinion of Baur, Schweigler, Strauss, Zeller, Volkmar, Hilgenfeld, Schenkel, Scholten, and Réville.

I cannot quite fall in with this radical party. I am still convinced that the fourth Gospel has a real connection with the Apostle John, and that it was written about the end of the first century. I confess, however, that in certain passages of my first edition I leaned too much in the direction of authenticity. The convincing force of some arguments upon which I then insisted seems to me diminished. I no longer believe that Saint Justin put the fourth Gos-

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pel on the same footing with the Synoptics among the Memoirs of the Apostles. The existence of "John the Elder," a personage distinct from the Apostle John, appears to me now very problematical. The theory that John, the son of Zebedee, wrote the work,—an hypothesis which I have never fully admitted, but for which, at moments, I felt a certain weakness,—is here discarded as improbable. Finally, I acknowledge that I was wrong in my hostility to the hypothesis of a spurious writing, ascribed to an apostle at the end of the apostolic age. The Second Epistle of Peter, the authenticity of which no one can reasonably maintain, is an example of a work, much less important no doubt than the fourth Gospel, forged under such conditions. Moreover, this is not for the moment the capital question. The essential thing is to know what use it is fit to make of the fourth Gospel when one essays to write the Life of Jesus. I persist in believing that this Gospel has a substantial value equal to that of the Synoptics, and even sometimes superior. The development of this point is of such importance that I have made it the topic of an appendix at the end of this volume. The portion of the introduction relating to the criticism of the fourth Gospel has been revised and completed.

In the body of the narrative several passages have also been modified in consequence of what has just been said. All phrases more or less implying that the fourth Gospel was by the Apostle John, or by an eye-witness of the evangelical facts, have been cut out. In order to trace the personal character of John, the son of Zebedee, I have thought of the rude "Boanerges" of Mark, the terrifying seer of the Apocalypse,—no longer of the mystic, full of tenderness, who has written the Gospel of Love. I insist, with less confidence, on certain little details furnished us by the fourth Gospel. The few citations I had made from the

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discourses of that Gospel have been still further reduced. I had allowed myself to follow too far in the steps of the alleged apostle in what concerned the promise of the "Comforter" (*παράκλητος*). In like manner, I am no longer so sure that the fourth Gospel is right in its disagreement with the Synoptics as to the day on which Jesus died. Regarding the Lord's Supper, on the contrary, I persist in my opinion. The synoptic account, which places the eucharistic institution on the last evening of Jesus' life, appears to me to involve an improbability almost equal to a miracle. That is, as I think, a view purely conventional, resting on a certain misty halo of recollections.

The critical view as to the Synoptics has not been substantially altered. It has been filled out and defined on some points, notably in that portion which concerns Luke. As regards Lysanias, a study of the inscription of Zenodorus at Baalbec, which I made for the Phœnician Mission, has led me to believe that the evangelist may have been less seriously in error than some ingenious critics think. As to Quirinius, on the contrary, the last memoir of Mommsen has settled the question against the third Gospel. Mark seems to me more and more the primitive type of the synoptic narrative, and the most authentic text.

The paragraph relating to the Apocryphal writings has been expanded. The important texts published by Ceriani have been put to service. I have had much hesitation about the Book of Enoch. I reject the opinion of Weisse, Volkmar, and Grätz, who believe that the whole book is posterior to Jesus. As to the most important portion of the book, which extends from chapter 27 to chapter 71, I do not venture to decide between the arguments of Hilgenfeld and Colani, who regard this portion as later than the time of Jesus, and the opinion of Hoffmann, Dillmann, Köstlin, Ewald, Lücke, and Weizsäcker, who hold it to be earlier. How



much is it to be desired that the Greek text of that important writing could be found! I do not know why I persist in believing that this is not a vain hope. In any case, I have expressed my doubt of the inductions drawn from the chapters just named. I have shown, on the contrary, the marked correspondence of the discourses of Jesus contained in the last chapters of the Synoptic Gospels with the Apocalypses attributed to Enoch. The discovery of the complete Greek text of the epistle ascribed to Barnabas has cast much light on these relations, which Weizsäcker has besides put in excellent relief. The positive results obtained by Volkmar in regard to the fourth Book of Esdras, which agree in almost every particular with those of Ewald, have been equally taken into consideration. Several new citations have been introduced from the Talmud. The space allotted to Essenism has been enlarged.

The course I have taken in discarding bibliography has often been wrongly interpreted. I believe I have plainly enough declared what I owe to the masters of German learning in general, and to each of them in particular, to prevent my silence from being taxed with ingratitude. Bibliography is useful only when it is complete. Now, the German genius has displayed such activity in the field of evangelical criticism that if I had cited all the works bearing on the questions treated in this book, I should have tripled the bulk of the notes and changed the character of my work. One cannot do everything at once. I have therefore kept to the rule of only admitting citations at first hand. Their number has been greatly multiplied. Besides, for the convenience of French readers who are not conversant with these studies, I have continued to give a summary list of writings composed in our language, where they may find details which I have unavoidably omitted. Many of these works are far remote from my ideas; but all are of a

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nature to make an educated man reflect, and to give him a fair understanding of our discussions.

The main text of the narrative has been little changed. Certain too strong expressions as to the communistic temper which was of the essence of Christianity at its birth have been softened down. Among those holding personal relations with Jesus I have admitted some whose names do not figure in the Gospels, but who are known to us through trustworthy evidence. That which relates to the name of Peter has been modified. I have also adopted another hypothesis in regard to Levi, son of Alpheus, and his relations with the Apostle Matthew. As to Lazarus, I unhesitatingly adopt now the ingenious hypothesis of Strauss, Baur, Zeller, and Scholten, according to which the pious beggar of Luke's parable and the person restored to life by Jesus are one and the same. It will nevertheless be seen how I still make him a real person by identifying him with Simon the Leper. I adopt likewise the hypothesis of Strauss in respect of various discourses ascribed to Jesus during his last days, which appear to be quotations from writings current in the first century. The textual discussion as to the duration of the public life of Jesus has been brought to greater precision. The topography of Bethphage and Dalmanutha has been modified. The question as to Golgotha has been taken up anew, following the investigations of M. Vogüé. A person well versed in the history of botany has taught me to distinguish, in the orchards of Galilee, between trees which grew there eighteen hundred years ago and those which were not transplanted there till later. Some facts have also been communicated to me in regard to the potion administered to the crucified; and to these I have given a place. In general, in the account of the last hours of Jesus, I have modified some phraseology which might have too much the look of history. It is here that Strauss's

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favourite explanations best meet the case, since here motives of symbol and dogma may be seen at every step.

I have said, and I repeat, that if the writer of the Life of Jesus should confine himself to setting forth those matters only which are certain, he must limit himself to a few lines. Jesus existed. He was from Nazareth in Galilee. There was charm in his preaching, and he left profound sayings deeply graven in the memory of his hearers. His two chief disciples were Cephas (Peter) and John the son of Zebedee. He excited the hatred of the orthodox Jews, who succeeded in having him put to death by Pontius Pilate, then procurator of Judæa. He was crucified outside the gate of the city. It was shortly after believed that he had been restored to life. This is what we should know for certain, even if the Gospels did not exist or were false, through authentic texts of incontestable date, such as the evidently genuine epistles of Saint Paul, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apocalypse, and other texts accepted by all. Beyond that, it is permissible to doubt. What was his family? What in particular was his affinity to that James, "the Lord's brother," who after his death plays an important part? Had he actual relations with John the Baptist, and did the most celebrated of his disciples belong to the school of the Baptist before they belonged to his? What were his ideas of the messiahship? Did he regard himself as the Messiah? What were his apocalyptic ideas? Did he believe that he would appear as the Son of Man in the clouds? Did he imagine that he wrought miracles? Were any attributed to him during his life? Did his legend grow up round himself, and had he cognisance of it? What was his moral character? What were his ideas regarding the admission of Gentiles into the Kingdom of God? Was he a pure Jew, like James, or did he break with Judaism, as the most active party in his Church did afterward? In

what order of growth was his thought subsequently wrought out? Those who seek only the indubitable in history must keep silent upon all that. In respect of these questions the Gospels are not much to be relied on, seeing that they often furnish arguments for two opposite opinions, the aspect of Jesus being modified in them according to the dogmatic view of the narrator. For my part I think that in such cases it is allowable to make conjectures, provided that they are presented as such. The texts, not being historic, give no certainty; but they give something. We should not follow them with blind confidence; we should not reject their testimony with unjust disdain. We must strive to divine what they conceal, without being ever quite certain of having found it.

It is singular that on almost all these points the liberal school of theology offers the most sceptical solutions. The more sensible defenders of Christianity have come to consider it advantageous to leave a gap in the historical circumstances bearing upon the birth of Christianity. Miracles and messianic prophecies, formerly the foundation of the Christian apology, have come to be its embarrassment: the aim now is to put them aside. If we listen to the partisans of this theology, among whom I could cite many eminent critics and noble thinkers, Jesus never pretended to perform a miracle; he did not believe himself to be the Messiah; he had no thought of the apocalyptic discourses which have been imputed to him touching the final catastrophe. That Papias, so clinging to tradition, so zealous to gather up the words of Jesus, was an enthusiastic millenarian; that Mark, the oldest and most authentic of the Gospel writers, is almost exclusively taken up with miracles,—matters little. The part assigned to Jesus is in this way so dwarfed that we should find it hard to tell what it was. His condemnation to death can on such an hypothesis

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no more be accounted for than the fortune which made him the chief of a messianic and an apocalyptic movement. Was it on account of his moral precepts or the Sermon on the Mount that Jesus was crucified? Certainly not. These maxims had for a long time been the current coin of the synagogues. No one has ever been put to death for repeating them. If Jesus was put to death at all, it was for saying something more than that. A learned man, who has taken part in these discussions, wrote me lately: "As in former times it was necessary to prove at all hazards that Jesus was God, so the Protestant theologians of our day must needs prove, not only that he was a mere man, but also that he always regarded himself as such. People persist in representing him as a man of clear intelligence, as the especially practical man; they transform him into the image and according to the spirit of modern theology. I believe with you that this is not doing justice to historical truth, but is neglecting an essential side of it."

This tendency has already been more than once logically developed in the bosom of Christianity. What did Marcion aim at? What did the Gnostics of the second century seek to do? Simply, to discard the material circumstances of a biography whose human details shocked them. Baur and Strauss yielded to the like philosophical necessities. The divine æon self-developed in a human life has nothing to do with anecdotic incidents, with the particular life of an individual. Scholten and Schenkel hold certainly to an historic and actual Jesus; but their historic Jesus is neither a messiah nor a prophet nor a Jew. One does not know what he aimed at, nor comprehended either his life or his death. Their Jesus is an æon after his own manner, a being impalpable, intangible. Pure history is not acquainted with any such beings. Pure history must construct its edifice out of two kinds of materials,—so to speak, out of two fac-

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tors: first, the general state of the human mind in a given age and country; second, the particular incidents which, combining with general causes, determined the course of events. To explain history by incidental facts is as false as to explain it by principles purely philosophic. The two explanations ought mutually to sustain and complete each other. The history of Jesus and of the apostles must, before all, be a history constructed out of a vast mixture of ideas and sentiments. Nor would even that be sufficient. A thousand chances, a thousand whims, a thousand trifles, are mingled in the ideas and sentiments. To trace at this day the exact details of these chances, whims, and trifles is impossible; what legend tells us of them may be true, but it may also not be true. In my opinion, the best course to hold is to keep as close as we can to the original narratives, while we discard impossibilities, put an interrogation-mark at every point, and offer as conjectures the various ways in which the event may have taken place. I am not quite sure that the conversion of Paul came about as we have it related in the Acts; but it took place in a manner not widely different from that, for Paul himself tells us that he had a vision of the risen Jesus, which gave an entirely new direction to his life. I am not sure that the narrative of the Acts as to the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost is quite historic; but the ideas which went abroad as to the baptism of fire lead me to believe that a scene took place in the apostolic circle in which thunder played a part, as at Sinai. The visions of the risen Jesus were in like manner occasioned by chance circumstances, interpreted by vivid and already preoccupied imaginations.

If liberal theologians repudiate explanations of this kind, it is because they do not wish to bring Christianity under the laws common to other religious movements; perhaps too because they do not sufficiently understand the theory of



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spiritual life. There is no religious movement in which such deceptions do not play a great part. It may even be said that they make the standing condition of certain communities, such as the Protestant pietists, the Mormons, and Catholic convents. In these little excited worlds it is not rare that conversions are the result of some incident in which the stricken soul sees the finger of God. These incidents, which always have in them something childish, are kept hid by the believers; it is a secret between Heaven and them. Chance is nothing to a cold or indifferent soul; to a soul possessed, it is a sign from God. To say that it was an outward incident which changed Paul or Ignatius Loyola through and through, or rather which gave a new turn to their activity, is certainly inexact. It is the interior movement of these strong natures that prepares a way for the thunderclap, yet the thunderclap itself was determined by an exterior cause. All these phenomena, moreover, have to do with a moral condition which is no longer our own. In a multitude of their acts the ancients were governed by dreams they had had the night before, by inferences drawn from the object that happened first to strike their sight, or by sounds which they believed they heard. The flight of birds, currents of the air, slight nervous attacks, have determined the fate of the world. This we must say, that our judgment may be honest and impartial; and when documents of some accuracy tell us stories of this kind, we must beware how we pass them over in silence. In history there are but few details which are certain; details, nevertheless, possess always some significance. The historian's talent consists in making a true picture out of features that are of themselves but half true.

Thus we can yield a place in history to particular incidents, without being on that account a rationalist of the old school, a disciple of Paulus. Paulus was a theologian who,

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wishing to have as little miracle as possible, and not daring to treat the Bible narratives as legends, put them to the rack so as to explain them all in a purely natural way. Paulus claimed, along with this, to retain for the Bible all its authority, and to enter into the real thought of the sacred writers.<sup>1247</sup> But I am a profane critic. I believe that no supernatural story is true to the letter; I think that out of a hundred tales of the supernatural eighty are born full-grown from popular imagination. Still, I admit that in certain very rare cases legend comes from an actual fact transformed by the imagination. As to the mass of supernatural incidents recounted by the Gospels and by the Acts, I shall attempt to show in five or six how the illusion may have been created. The theologian, invariably methodical, insists that a single explanation should hold good from one end of the Bible to the other. The critic believes that every explanation should be attempted, or rather that the possibility of each should be shown in its turn. What an explanation may contain repugnant to our taste is no reason for rejecting it. The world is a stage-play at once infernal and divine,—a strange symphony conducted by a leader of genius, in which good and ill, the ugly and the beautiful, march in the ranks assigned them, so as to fulfil a mysterious end. History is not history if in reading it one is not by turns charmed and disgusted, saddened and consoled.

The first task of the historian is to sketch well the environment in which the events he recounts took place. Now,

<sup>1247</sup> Here was the weakness of Paulus. If he had been content to say that many stories of miracle have a foundation of natural events misunderstood, he would have been right. But it was childish of him to insist that the sacred writer only meant to relate quite simple things, and that it was doing a good turn for the Bible text to rid it of its miracles. The lay critic can and should make such hypotheses, called "rationalist;" but the theologian has no such right, for their condition antecedent is to assume that the text is not revealed.

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the history of religious beginnings transports us into a world of women and children, of heads hot or dizzyed. These facts, placed before minds of a positive order, are absurd and unintelligible: this is why countries such as England, ponderously rational, find it impossible to comprehend anything about them. The thing that lacks in the arguments, once so famous, of Sherlock or Gilbert West upon the resurrection, of Lyttelton upon the conversion of Saint Paul, is not the reasoning process,—that is a triumph of solidity; it is the just appreciation of the difference in environment. Every religious effort we are clearly acquainted with exhibits a prodigious mixture of the sublime and the ridiculous. Read those narratives of primitive Saint Simonism, written with admirable candour by the surviving adepts.<sup>1248</sup> By the side of repulsive exhibitions, tasteless declamations, what charm, what sincerity, when the man or the woman of the people enters upon the scene, bearing the artless confession of a soul which opens to the first gentle ray that has struck it! There is more than one example of beautiful, durable things which have been founded upon strange puerilities. It were needless to seek for any proportion between the conflagration and the spark that lights it. The devotion of Salette is one of the great religious events of our age.<sup>1249</sup> These cathedrals, so noble, of Chartres or Laon, were reared upon illusions of the same sort. The festival of Corpus Christi (*Fête-Dieu*) originated in the visions of a female religionist of Liège, who always believed that in her prayers she saw the full moon with a small cleft. We could instance movements, absolutely sincere, which have sprung up about impostors. The discovery of the holy lance at Antioch, in which the fraud was so patent, decided the fortune of the Crusades. Mormonism,

<sup>1248</sup> *Œuvres de Saint-Simon et d'Enfantin*. Paris, Dentu, 1865-66.

<sup>1249</sup> That of Lourdes seems to be taking equal proportions.

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which in its origin was so discreditable, has inspired courage and devotion. The religion of the Druses rests upon a tissue of absurdities that stagger the imagination; but it has its devotees. Islamism, which is the second great event in the history of the world, would not now exist if the son of Amina had not been an epileptic. The gentle and immaculate Francis of Assisi would not have succeeded without Brother Elias. Humanity is so feeble of mind that the purest thing needs the co-operation of some impure agent.

Let us guard against applying our scrupulous distinctions, our reasonings of cool and clear heads, to the appreciation of these extraordinary events, which are at once so much above and beneath us. One would make Jesus a sage, one a philosopher, one a patriot, one a good man, one a moralist, one a saint. He was not any one of these. He was a man who charmed. Let us not make the past in our own image. Let us not believe that Asia is Europe. With us, for example, the madman is a creature outside the common rule; we torture him so as to make him re-enter it: the horrible methods of the old mad-houses were the result of scholastic and Cartesian logic. In the East, the lunatic is a privileged being; he enters the highest councils without any one daring to stop him; he is listened to, he is consulted. He is a being believed to be nearer to God, inasmuch as, his individual reason being extinguished, he is believed to be a partaker in the divine reason. The wit which, through delicate raillery, rises above all defects of reason, has no existence in Asia. A person of high rank of Islam told me that, repairs having become necessary a few years ago at the tomb of Mahomet at Medina, an appeal was made to the masons, with the warning that he who should descend into that formidable place should have his head cut off on reascending. A man offered himself, went down, made the repairs, then submitted to be beheaded. "It could not

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be helped," said my interlocutor to me; "we picture those places to ourselves in a certain manner, and there must not be any one who can say that they are otherwise."

Troubled consciences cannot have the clearness of good sense. Now, it is only troubled consciences that lay foundations with power. I have tried to draw a picture in which the colours should be blended as they are in nature, which should be a likeness of humanity,—that is to say, at once grand and puerile, in which one should see the divine instinct threading its way with safety through a thousand peculiarities. If the picture had been without shadow, this would have been the proof that it was false. The condition of the written proofs does not permit us to say in what cases the allusion was conscious of itself. All that we can say is, that sometimes it was so. One cannot lead for years the life of a wonder-worker without being often cornered,—without having one's hand forced by the public. The man about whom a legend arises in his lifetime is led tyrannically by this legend. One begins by artlessness, credulity, absolute innocence,—one ends in all sorts of embarrassments; and, in order to sustain the divine power which is at fault, he gets out of these embarrassments by the most desperate expedients. When one is pushed to the wall, must he leave the work of God to perish because God is slow to show himself? Did not Joan of Arc more than once make her Voices speak in response to the need of the moment? If the account of the secret revelation which she made to King Charles VII. has any reality,—which it is difficult to deny,—it must be that this innocent girl gave out as supernatural intuition what she had heard in confidence. An exposition of religious history which does not throw some cross-light upon suggestions of this sort, is by that very fact argued to be incomplete.

Every true or probable or possible circumstance must

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then have a place in my narration, together with its shade of probability. In such a history it was necessary to speak not only of what actually took place, but also of that which may probably have taken place. The impartiality with which I treated my subject forbade me to reject a supposition, even though it was painful; for undoubtedly there was much that was shocking in the way things came to pass. From beginning to end I have applied the same process inflexibly. I have given voice to the good impressions which the texts have suggested to me; I must not, therefore, be silent as to the bad. I have wished that my book might keep its value even in the day when people should come to regard a certain amount of fraud as an element inseparable from religious history. It was necessary to make my hero noble and charming,—for undeniably he was so; and that, too, in spite of actions which in our days would be judged unfavorably. I have been praised for attempting to construct a narrative living, human and possible. Would my work have deserved these praises if it had pictured the origins of Christianity as absolutely spotless? That would have been to admit the greatest of miracles; and the result of this would have been a picture lifeless to the last degree. I do not say that in lack of faults I ought to have invented some. At all events, I must leave each text to produce its melodious or discordant note. If Goethe were now alive he would commend me for this scruple. That great man would not have forgiven me for producing a portrait wholly celestial: he would have desired to find repellent features; for, assuredly, in actual life things happen which would wound us if only it were given us to see them. Still, as such matters are brimful of edification, I have thought it my duty to select from the "Life of Jesus" a small volume in which nothing can affront the pious souls that have no care for criticism. I have entitled it "Jesus," to distin-



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guish it from the present work, which alone makes part of the series entitled "History of the Origins of Christianity." None of the changes made in the edition here offered to the public affects that little volume; I shall never make any alterations in it.

The same difficulty presents itself, moreover, in the history of the Apostles. This history is admirable in its way; but what can be more shocking than the "speaking with tongues," which is attested by unexceptionable texts of Paul? Liberal theologians admit that the disappearance of the body of Jesus was one of the grounds for the belief in the resurrection. What does that signify, but that the Christian conscience at that moment was two-sided; that one-half of that conscience gave birth to the illusion of the other half? If the same disciples had taken away the body, and then spread themselves over the city crying, "He is risen!" the imposture would have been called by the right name. But, no doubt, it was not the same persons who did the two things. For belief in a miracle to be accepted, it is indeed necessary that some one be responsible for the first rumour which is spread abroad; but, ordinarily, this is not the principal actor. His part is limited to making no protest against the reputation which has been given him. Even if he did protest, it would be useless; popular opinion would prove stronger than he. Thus the founder of Babism did not attempt to perform a single miracle; yet in his own lifetime he passed for a wonder-worker of the highest rank. In the miracle of La Salette, people had a clear idea of the artifice; but the conviction that it did good to religion carried all before it. Fraud shared among many grows unconscious of itself; or, rather, it ceases to be fraud, and becomes misapprehension. Nobody in that case deceives deliberately; everybody deceives innocently. Formerly it was taken for granted that every legend implies

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deceivers and deceived; in our opinion, all the parties to a legend are at once deceived and deceivers. A miracle, in other words, presupposes three conditions: first, general credulity; second, a little complaisance on the part of some; third, tacit acquiescence in the principal actor. Let us not, through reaction against the brutal explanations of the eighteenth century, fall into the trap of hypotheses which imply effects without cause. Legend does not spring up of itself; outside help brings it to the birth. The points it rests on are often extremely slight. It is the popular imagination that makes the snowball; there was, however, an original nucleus. The two persons who composed the two genealogies of Jesus, knew quite well that the lists were not of any great authenticity. The apocryphal books, the alleged apocalypses of Daniel, Enoch, and Esdras, proceed from persons of strong convictions; but the authors of these works knew well they were neither Daniel, Enoch, nor Esdras. The Asiatic priest who composed the romance of Thekla declared that he had done it out of love for Paul. We should say the same of the author of the fourth Gospel, surely a person of first-rate importance. Drive the illusion of religious history out of one door, and it re-enters by another. In fine, one can hardly mention a great event of the past which took place in an entirely defensible manner. Shall we cease to be Frenchmen because France was founded by centuries of perfidy? Shall we refuse to profit by the benefits of the Revolution because the Revolution committed crimes without number? If the house of Capet had succeeded in creating for us a good constitutional law-court, like that of England, should we wrangle over the cure of the "king's evil"?

Science alone is pure, for science has nothing to do with practice: it does not touch men; the Propaganda takes no heed of it. Its duty is to prove, not to persuade or to con-

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vert. He who has discovered a theorem publishes its demonstration for those who can understand it. He does not go up into a pulpit; he does not gesticulate; he has no recourse to oratorical artifices to get it adopted by those who do not perceive its truth. Enthusiasm, certainly, has its good faith, but it is the good faith of a child; it is not the deep reflective good faith of the critical scholar. The ignorant yield only to bad reasonings. If Laplace had had to gain the multitude over to his system of the world, he could not have limited himself to mathematical demonstrations. M. Littré, in writing the Life of a man whom he regards as his master, could push candour so far as to leave nothing unsaid, however it might lower him in general esteem. That is without example in religious history. Science alone seeks after pure truth. She alone offers good reasons for truth, and carries a severe criticism into the employment of her means of conviction. This is no doubt the reason why, till now, she has had no influence on the people. In the future, perhaps, when people are better instructed, as we are led to hope they may be, they will yield only to good formal proofs. But it would not be fair to judge the great men of the past on such grounds. There are natures that resign themselves to impotence,—that accept humanity, with all its weaknesses, such as it is. Many great things could not have been accomplished without lies or without violence. If to-morrow the incarnate ideal were to come and offer itself to men to govern them, it would find itself confronted by folly, which wishes to be deceived; by self-will, which insists on being beaten down. The only one without reproach is the contemplative man, who aims simply to find the truth, without caring either to make it triumph or to apply it to facts.

Ethics is not history. To paint and to relate is not to approve. The naturalist who describes the transformations

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of a chrysalis neither blames nor praises it. He does not tax it with ingratitude because it abandons its shroud; he does not regard it as rash because it unfolds its wings; he does not accuse it of folly because it aspires to soar into space. One may be the passionate friend of the true and the beautiful, and yet show himself indulgent to the simple ignorance of the people. The ideal alone is spotless. Our happiness has cost our fathers torrents of tears and rivers of blood. In order that pious souls may taste at the foot of the altar the inward consolation which gives them life, it has needed centuries of tyrannical restraint, the mysteries of sacerdotal polity, a rod of iron, fires of martyrdom. The respect due to every great institution demands no sacrifice of historical good faith. Formerly, to be a good Frenchman, it was necessary to believe in Clovis's dove, in the national antiquities of the Treasure of Saint Denis, in the virtues of the oriflamme, in the supernatural mission of Joan of Arc; it was necessary to believe that France was the first of nations, that French royalty was superior to all other royalties, that God had a predilection for that crown wholly unique, and was constantly engaged in protecting it. To-day we know that God protects equally all kingdoms, all empires, all republics; we own that many kings of France have been contemptible men; we recognise that the French character has its faults; we frankly admire a multitude of things which come from abroad. Are we on that account worse Frenchmen? We can say, on the contrary, that we are better patriots; since, instead of being blind to our faults, we seek to correct them, and in place of maligning the foreigner, seek to imitate the good there is in him. In like manner we are Christians. He who speaks with irreverence of mediæval royalty, of Louis XIV, of the Revolution, of the Empire, commits an act of bad taste. He who does not speak gently of Christianity and of the church of

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which he forms a part makes himself guilty of ingratitude. But filial gratitude ought not to be carried to the length of closing our eyes to the truth. One is not wanting in respect to a government when he points out that it has not succeeded in satisfying the conflicting needs that are in man; or to a religion, in saying that it is not free from the formidable objections which science raises against all supernatural belief. Responding to certain social demands and not to certain others, governments fall by the very causes that have founded them and made their strength. Responding to the aspirations of the heart despite the protests of reason, religions crumble away in turn, because no force hitherto has succeeded in stifling reason.

Disastrous to Reason the day when she should stifle religion! Our planet, believe me, is toiling at some mighty task. Do not pronounce rashly upon the inutility of such and such of its parts; do not say that it is needful to suppress this wheel-work, which seems only to thwart the play of the others. Nature, which has endowed the animal with an infallible instinct, has put into humanity nothing deceptive. From his organs you may fearlessly infer his destiny. *Est Deus in nobis*. Religions are false when they attempt to prove the infinite, to define it, to incarnate it (if I may so speak); but they are true when they affirm it. The greatest errors are nothing compared to the value of the truth which they proclaim. The simplest of the simple, provided he practise heart-worship, is more enlightened as to the reality of things than the materialist who thinks he explains everything by chance or by finite causes.

## LIFE OF THE AUTHOR

Ernest Renan was born in Tréguier, Côtes du Nord, 28 February 1823, the son of a fisherman and local tradesman. Already, within little more than half a century, the grey coast of Brittany had given to France two great religious philosophers, Chateaubriand and Lamennais. Like them Renan inherited from his fisher ancestry the Breton temperament, mystic and unbending; he was, says his biographer, Madame Darmesteter, "as Breton as Merlin himself." But the gloom of the Celtic nature was tempered by the gaiety of his Gascon mother. "I am of a two-fold nature," he says of himself. "One part of me laughs while the other weeps. So one of them is always bound to be content."

In the country of romance, which gave to the world Launcelot and Tristram, the childhood of Renan passed in poverty. When the boy was five his father died and the leadership of the family devolved on Henriette, Ernest's senior by twelve years, a frail girl who was neither comely nor brilliant but in whose soul burned the knightly spirit of her country's dreams. For the sake of her family she sacrificed her wish to enter a convent and since she possessed a good education went to teach in Paris. Some years before she parted from her idolized younger brother she had placed him in the priests' school of St. Ives to study for the priesthood. The thought of marriage she put from her as she had the dream of religious life that she might the better help the gifted Ernest.

At St. Ives young Renan learned Latin and mathematics; the Tréguier curriculum was not lengthy. The priests however did much for him. "They taught me" says Renan,



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“the love of truth, the respect for reason, the earnestness of life. . . . Old and dear masters, nearly all of you dead to-day, whose image often visits my dreams—not as a reproach, but as a mild and charming memory—I have not been as unfaithful to you as you think! At heart I am still your disciple.” Here at Tréguier the boy stayed until 1838. Then having by his achievements attracted the notice of the Abbé Dupanloup of St. Nicholas du Chardonnet he was sent for to continue his studies in Paris.

In the brilliant Catholicism of the capital the boy found ideas unsuspected at peaceful Tréguier. He read German thinkers; “I thought I entered a temple!” he writes. For seven years he read and thought and wrestled with conflicting doubts and aspirations. The German philosophy he found “a continuation of Jesus Christ,” yet to break with his loved Catholicism seemed impossible. “Even if Christianity be only a dream,” he wrote, “the priesthood remains a divine type.” To Henriette, now teaching in Poland, he poured out his thoughts. She too had lost her old belief. It was she who firmly held before him the highest ideals of truth and honor, who would not let him lower his standard and make compromises. “Above all,” she wrote, “do not think of us,—of our family well-being. There is no true claim there,—I can suffice.” He still believed, he said; he prayed. “Yes, I am pious, fervidly pious, sometimes, in spite of all my doubts. I think I shall always remain pious in any case. . . . There are moments when I think I will amputate my reason and live only for the mystic life.”

In the autumn of 1845 decision was made. The cloisters opened for Ernest Renan to pass out into a world of lay thinkers to fight for the truth as he saw it. The farewell was kindly. The good Abbé Dupanloup had reared an enemy to the cause he worked for, but he sent out his

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protégé with gentleness and agreed that anything was better than hypocrisy. "Are you in need of money?" was his kindly question at parting. "My poor purse is at your disposal. I wish I could give you something much more valuable."

The choice made, the genius of his college, already a Semitic scholar of note, became practically usher at a boys' school. Renan had however much leisure and spent it in pursuing his studies in Semitic philology, not discouraged by his obscure position. "I have the instinct of success," he wrote to his sister. Two years later when only twenty-four years old he won the Volney prize of the Institute of France and shortly after became professor of philosophy at the Lycée of Vendôme. The political upheaval of 1848 stirred him deeply. He was a liberal but his ideas of democracy were offended by the bloody events of that year. Indeed his democracy was always of the head rather than of the heart.

Shortly after this Henriette returned from Poland to live with her brother whom she had not seen for ten years. Renan had now a position at the National library and was devoting much time to the writing of brilliant essays. His sister was his secretary and critic; to her he owes much of the purity of his style. Averroes, published in 1852, brought him much reputation. Three years later he published the General History of Semitic Languages, with which he had won the Volney prize. Essays followed one another rapidly and were collected into volumes. He wrote much for the liberal organ, *Les Débats*; he became known as "a great republican."

Renan's marriage to Cornélie Scheffer, niece of Ary Scheffer the artist, did not disturb the intimacy between the brother and sister. The three lived together and the elder Madame Renan joined the household in Paris. Chil-

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dren came and some years passed in the pleasant routine of daily duties when in 1860 the emperor offered the philologist an archæological mission to Phœnicia. As a matter of course Henriette accompanied her brother and the two arrived in Syria in the autumn.

In the next year the Life of Jesus took shape. Henriette copied and helped in every way. The pair became absorbed in their work and carried their devotion to a fatal extent. Disdaining the warnings of fever they labored on and in September fell dangerously ill. In a few days Henriette was dead. She was in her lonely grave before the brother, so loved and so devoted, knew of her death.

Henriette had for years counselled her brother to accept no chair at the College of France but that of Hebrew, which was practically a chair of Biblical criticism. In 1862 the emperor gave this to Renan as the foremost French Semitic scholar. The first lecture was an event of moment. The orthodox flocked to hear bold heresies; the liberals came in an angry body to see if the favor of the emperor would tone down the beliefs of the prophet of the new thought. The restraining hand of Henriette was lifted from her brother. Dreamer that he was at heart, he never suspected the feelings of the audience that awaited him. With his mind full of his work at home he spoke of Jesus; "an incomparable man, deified in his death," was the phrase he used. The wildest confusion reigned. Renan to escape the ovation of the students left by a back way and the liberals, going to his home, shouted his name for hours. The new professor was promptly suspended. The result of the famous lecture was not only the loss of the chair but the discovery that he, the quiet man, the scholar, was more than ever identified with the politics of the liberal party.

The great crises of Renan's life were now past. His

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fate had been decided and he had but to follow the path he had chosen. He set to work on his projected history of the Origins of Christianity, as described in his preface to the Life of Jesus. This tremendous work occupied the greater part of the rest of his life. The Apostles appeared in 1866; St. Paul in 1869; Antichrist in 1873; The Gospels in 1877; The Christian Church in 1879 and Marcus Aurelius in 1882. For each volume he travelled and studied the ground.

Not all Renan's life was devoted to his literary work. In 1869 he was a candidate of the liberal opposition for the chamber of deputies. He was defeated with difficulty. His position under the empire was improved so far that there was talk of re-instating him in the chair of Hebrew, but before this became more than talk war was declared with Germany. Renan was almost heartbroken. He thought the war criminal, "stark, staring madness." When the tragic sequel justified his prophecy he retired from active life and consoled himself with philosophy. He wrote philosophical dramas and essays and dreamed in disillusionment.

In 1879 Renan was elected to the Academy not without opposition. He was now identified with most of the learned societies of France and his reputation was prodigious. He stopped his work on religious questions to write his *Souvenirs*, which appeared in 1883, and took the world by storm with their charm of matter and manner. Then returning to his great plan he set to work on his lengthy history of Israel. Only three of the five volumes appeared before his death, and his work was made difficult by ill-health. The summer of 1892 he spent on his loved Breton coast, but at the warning of approaching death he returned to Paris and died almost in harness 12 October 1892. He was buried with the greatest honor in the ceme-

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tery of Montmartre. It was impossible to give him the resting-place he most desired. It had been his wish to lie where he had walked in happy dreams and learned to love and seek the ideal; could his desire have been carried out he would have lain in the cloister at Tréguier, on his tomb the words "I chose Truth."

## THE STORY OF THE BOOK

The real story of Renan's *Life of Jesus* would be the history of France from the days preceding the great revolution. More than that it would include the history of the author's own country of Brittany, for the book is saturated with the spirit of that land. Out of the revolt against old beliefs, out of the upheaval, social and mental, of the century 1750-1850, comes a book which combines the free thought of Paris with the poetry of the romantic northern coast. The *Life of Jesus* stands in a class alone among religious works. It has been called for its sweetness and charm a sort of fifth gospel, the gospel according to Thomas the Doubter. No other work of the kind has ever had an equal popularity; as a piece of literature it has no rival among books of scholarship. The beauty of its style can be denied by no one whatever criticisms may be brought to bear on its matter.

The book appeared 23 June 1863. Renan's position at this time is described in the preceding *Life*, as are also the peculiarly interesting circumstances attending its composition. It was written for the most part in Syrian huts, under the influence of the scenes through which Jesus walked. From this it receives its spontaneous charm and at the same time lays itself open to criticism. When the volume was first published it was accused of many crimes against scholarship, and these were so far true that Renan altered it greatly before the thirteenth edition, the form in which the book is now circulated. At first he laid stress on the Gospel of John; in the thirteenth edition he changed this and agreed that little confidence could be placed in that document, excepting the last few chapters. In this



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way some of the criticism called forth by the original publication loses its force.

On the first appearance of the *Life Saint Beuve*, who was the friend and admirer of Renan, wrote an imaginary conversation between three readers of the book. The first is an orthodox Catholic who thinks the tradition of the church quite as logical as Renan's many "perhapses." Both tradition and radical criticism are conjectural. The sceptic says that Renan is still under the influence of the church. He has not dared to deal with Jesus quite as with a fellow-man. The book lacks courage. The third, a man of the world, thinks that no man of intelligence and experience accepts Christianity as preached, but that it is a good thing for the masses and should be preserved. The book has therefore no *raison d'être*. The charge of overfondness for conjecture was often repeated. Renan did not alter this characteristic of his work. His passion for truth forbade him to do so. Edmond Scherer thought the book far too æsthetic and could not believe that Jesus lent himself to fraud in connection with the miracles. Mommson, in his German way, called Renan a true savant "in spite of his beautiful style." Prosper Mérimée sneered but remarked patronizingly, "Still it is interesting." George Sand found her ideal of Jesus lowered by it. "However," she observed, "as I am persuaded that Christianity can only do harm, I think Monsieur Renan's book the most useful he could have written." The Empress Eugénie said that to believers it would do no harm, while to scoffers it would teach reverence. Not all Catholics held this opinion; Renan received periodically for some months letters in a woman's handwriting containing the single remark "There is a hell!" The pope some years later referred to him as "the blasphemer of Europe."

Such was the storm raised by the publication of the

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Life of Jesus. Littré's French translation of Strauss's Life of Jesus had appeared in 1840, but the more popular form of Renan's work gave him a far wider audience. He thought that Strauss with all his scholarship and care had failed in an essential—he did not show why Jesus was so loved by his followers. This certainty was a pitfall that Renan sought to avoid, and his insistence on the personal charm of Jesus has brought down on his book charges of effeminacy, "Frenchiness" and so forth. But the book quickly conquered its public. In five months the eleventh edition was exhausted and 66,000 copies were in circulation; there were two German translations, two Dutch, one Italian and one English. It is impossible to calculate how many translations and editions have been issued in all, but certainly no less than half a million copies have been printed. In 1864 a cheap popular edition entitled "Jesus" omitted the chapter on miracles and the pages dealing with the resurrection of Lazarus. Thus the chief stumbling-block was removed and Renan thought that the usefulness of his work was for many souls increased, but this was merely one special edition and the author in no way recanted his views, which remain in every other edition. In the thirteenth edition he added many footnotes giving authorities. Although these authorities are not all available for the average reader, they go to show how thorough was the work of research done by Renan. Inscriptions, coins, strange volumes from everywhere yielded him their tribute and testified to the sincerity of his search after light.

## TABLE OF DATES

The dates here given are taken from the best authorities of the school to which Renan belonged, and are generally received as correct within a few years. Absolute exactness is impossible and in the matter of the dates of the books of Daniel, Ecclesiastes and Canticles orthodox scholarship of course differs widely. Many allusions not annotated in the body of the book will be explained by reference to this table, where they will be found in their proper connection with the political history of the Jews in the important centuries immediately preceding the time of Jesus, the appearance of volumes which influenced his thought, the change of the Jewish religion into a mass of observances, the dispersion of the race around the Mediterranean and the consequent paving of the way for Christianity. The importance of a clear conception of the history of the period is expressed by Renan in the phrase "There is no substitute for the ripeness of time" (History of Israel, 5:1).

- 582 B.C. Third and last deportation of Judæans to Babylon. During the period of captivity literature flourishes. The historical books are compiled and Ezekiel and the Babylonian Isaiah prophesy.
- 538 B.C. Cyrus takes Babylon and permits the exiles to return.
- 537 B.C. First return under Zerubbabel and Joshua ben Jehozedek.
- 516 B.C. The second temple dedicated.
- 459 B.C. Ezra leads a second body of returning Jews. Under him many religious reforms are carried out.

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- 444 B.C. Nehemiah leads the third return. Under him Jerusalem is fortified.
- 432 B.C. Malachi, the last of the prophets.
- 420 B.C. Synagogues come into existence for religious discussion. Zeal for the Law becomes so intense that the Jews add many minor observances to those of the older book, "erecting a hedge around the Law."
- 338 B.C. Book of Chronicles written.
- 332 B.C. Alexander the Great enters Jerusalem. He treats the Jews with consideration, sacrifices in the temple and promises them protection.
- 320 B.C. Onias II high priest. Ptolemy I Soter captures Jerusalem on the Sabbath, the citizens refusing to defend themselves on the holy day. He takes prisoners to Alexandria, thus founding the colony of Alexandrian Jews which afterwards assumes great importance.
- 301 B.C. Judæa becomes tributary to Egypt after the battle of Ipsus. The office of high priest becomes political.
- 300 B.C. Simon the Just, high priest. He is the "last of the men of the great synagogue." He begins the collection of oral traditions which subsequently took shape in the Talmud.
- 217 B.C. Antigonus of Soco carries on the work of Simon the Just.
- 209 B.C. The Song of Songs composed.
- 203 B.C. Greek learning penetrates Judæa. The Hellenists begin to appear as a distinct party. Opposed to them are the Chasidim who dread the approach of polytheism.
- 200 B.C. Jesus the son of Sirach writes Ecclesiasticus.
- 188 B.C. Palestine under Syria.

## TABLE OF DATES

- 175 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes, king. He makes a Hellenist high priest. Greek games in Jerusalem.
- 168 B.C. Antiochus orders the Jews to become Hellenists. A statue of Jupiter is erected in the temple and pagan rites are celebrated. Hundreds of Jews, refusing to sacrifice to Greek gods, are tortured and put to death. Mattathias leads several thousands of the faithful into the desert.
- 167-6 B.C. Under Judas Maccabæus, son of Mattathias, about 6,000 of the Chasidim unite and win a series of victories over the Syrians at great odds. The Book of Daniel composed, the first of the messianic literature.
- 165 B.C. The Syrians totally defeated, Judas enters Jerusalem, purifies the temple and institutes Chanukah, the feast of lights.
- 160 B.C. Judas wins further victories and seeks an alliance with Rome. He is killed in battle. His brothers continue the conflict.
- 159 B.C. Judæa freed from Syria. Establishment of the Asmonean (Maccabæan) dynasty of high priests.
- 150 B.C. The Pentateuch is translated into Greek for the Jews of Alexandria and Cyrene.
- 140 B.C. Judæa and Rome allies. The Asmonean dynasty undisputed lords of Palestine. The Jewish Sibylline literature begins in Egypt.
- 109 B.C. Great prosperity under John Hyrcanus, high priest. Rise of the sects of Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes. Disputes between the Sadducees, the conservatives, and Pharisees, the innovators, grow bitter. The zeal of the Chasidim begins to degenerate into pedantry. The Apocalypse of Enoch composed.
- 105 B.C. Aristobulus I assumes the title of king.

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- 79 B.C. Simon ben Shetach and Judah ben Tabbai, Pharisees, reorganize the Sanhedrim.
- 63 B.C. Pompey takes Jerusalem after a three months' siege. He enters the Holy of Holies but otherwise respects the Jewish faith. End of the Asmonean dynasty. Beginning of the Jewish colony at Rome.
- 60 B.C. Shemaya and Abtalion, Jewish doctors, teach.
- 40 B.C. Herod the Idumean, called the "demi-Jew," proclaimed king of Palestine by the Roman senate. The Book of Baruch, the Assumption of Moses and other messianic and apocalyptic works appear.
- 37 B.C. Herod marries Mariamne, Asmonean princess.
- 35 B.C. Herod, alarmed at the popularity of the young Aristobulus, brother of Mariamne and hereditary high priest, has him murdered.
- 30 B.C. Hillel the liberal and Shammai the casuist found opposing schools.
- 20 B.C. Dedication of Herod's temple. Many works of great splendor erected.
- 4 B.C. Birth of Jesus: (One year earlier according to Graetz and Clinton; two years later according to the Jewish Encyclopedia.) Death of Herod the Great.
  
- 3 A.D. Revolt of Judas the Galilean or Gaulonite, founder of the party of Zealots.
- 6 A.D. Judæa a Roman province.
- 18 A.D. Judaism makes many converts in Greece and Rome. In Egypt Philo has elevated the Judæo-Hellenic culture to its highest point.
- 26 A.D. Pontius Pilate appointed procurator.



## TABLE OF DATES

- 33 A.D. Crucifixion of Jesus. (Three years earlier according to Graetz; four years earlier according to Clinton and the Jewish Encyclopedia.)
- 41 A.D. Agrippa I, king of all Palestine.
- 44 A.D. Theudas, calling himself the Messiah, is executed.
- 48 A.D. Missions of Paul begin.
- 49 A.D. The Zealots and Sicarii become very active at Jerusalem.
- 65 A.D. Persecution of the Christians in Rome by Nero.
- 66 A.D. Rebellion against Rome led by Eleazar, the Zealot.
- 67 A.D. Reign of terror in Jerusalem under Zealots, who put to death anyone who speaks of making terms with Rome.
- 68 A.D. Apocalypse of John, first book of the New Testament, composed (according to Renan).
- 70 A.D. Titus besieges Jerusalem. The Romans take the city, after a desperate defense of five months. Few of the garrison are taken alive. The temple is burned and the city is demolished. Over 1,000,000 Jews perish. End of the Jewish state in Palestine.
- 75 A.D. Josephus writes Wars of the Jews.
- 93 A.D. Josephus writes Antiquities of the Jews.
- 96 A.D. Persecution of the Christians. John exiled to Patmos.
- 97 A.D. The fourth Book of Esdras composed.
- 132-5 A.D. Insurrection against Romans—the most important of several—in Palestine led by Barcohab. Rise of Gnosticism in the Christian church. Marcion becomes prominent a little later. The Ebionites (Judaizing Christians) become a distinct sect.

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- 138 A.D. First apology of Justin Martyr.
- 160 A.D. Birth of Tertullian. The controversy about Easter begins.
- 185 A.D. Birth of Origen. Christianity spreads rapidly.
- 200 A.D. Birth of Cyprian.
- 202 A.D. Martyrdom of Irenæus.
- 226 A.D. Hippolytus writes against all heresies. Life of Apollonius of Tyana is written by Philostartus.
- 256 A.D. Birth of Arius the heresiarch.
- 270 A.D. Death of Plotinus, the neo-Platonist.
- 275 A.D. Period of rest from persecution for Christians. They are received at court and hold office.
- 303 A.D. The tenth general persecution.
- 313 A.D. Constantine the Great establishes universal freedom of religion.
- 324 A.D. Christianity professed by the emperor, who recommends it to his subjects. End of the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius.
- 325 A.D. First œcumenical council at Nicæa. Arius is condemned as a heretic. The Nicene creed is framed, declaring the Son of "the same substance" as the Father. The separation of Easter from any connection with the Jewish calendar settles this disputed point and removes the last trace of connection between Christianity and Judaism.
- 375 A.D. The Jerusalem Talmud is completed.
- 381 A.D. The second œcumenical council amends the Nicene creed and affirms the deity of the Holy Ghost.
- 427 A.D. The Babylonian Talmud is completed.

## NOTES ON THE TEXT

[Many historical references and proper names are explained in the Table of Dates.]

8 *The Beni-Israel.* Volume 1 of the History of the People of Israel develops Renan's striking theory of the monotheistic nomadic tribes devoted to the worship of El. "Even at this remote period," he says, "the Semite shepherd bore upon his forehead the seal of the absolute God upon which was written: 'This race will rid the earth of superstition.' " In chapter 8 he writes: "Among the tribes thus devoted to the worship of El and connected with the mythical Abraham of Ur-Casdim there was one which distinguished itself by a sort of religious gravity and scrupulous attachment to the supreme God. Its name was Israel, the meaning of which word was doubtful though it unquestionably indicated the submission of this family to El."

10 *New texts such as Deuteronomy.* Renan holds that after the separation of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah the law of each state took shape. The date is somewhere in the ninth century B.C. The tradition on which these laws were based is undoubtedly of much more ancient date. The two documents are known as the Elohist and the Jahveist, in reference to the difference in the word used to designate God. The Elohist document comprised the Decalogue and belonged to the kingdom of Judah. The Jahveist book of the kingdom of Israel included Exodus 20:22 to 23:20. "The same gentle, kindly feeling, the same love of a peaceful life pervades both the histories." Volume 2 of the History of Israel, chapters 10-15, develops

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this theory. The later law Renan assigns to the year 622 B. C., when the Book of the Law was reported to have been "found in the house of the Lord" (2 Kings 22-24). "The moving spirit in the whole of this deception" Renan considers Jeremiah. The text contained the section Deut. 4:45 to the end of chapter 27. The custom of putting forth works stamped with the names of the great men of the past was a favorite one among the Jewish people. Renan says (vol. 3, book 5, chap. 15):

"The Torah discovered (that is to say fabricated) under Josiah was the basis of the special religion which was founded in the eighth and seventh centuries B. C. in Palestine. This Torah was the worst enemy of the universal religion of which the prophets of the eighth century dreamed. Jesus could cause the spirit of the prophets to triumph only by denying it outright. But human things are a compound of matter and mind. Liberty and the chain, that which excites and that which restrains, the sublime and the commonplace, are equally necessary in the construction of a general whole which is to endure. But for the precision of the Torah the ardent preaching of the prophets would have remained fruitless."

11 *This law was wholly social and moral.* "The code conceived under Josiah which is known as Deuteronomy is the first of any extent in which an attempt was made to establish a system of guarantees for the weak at the expense of the rich and the strong. . . . Never was love for the humble and the neglected carried so far. We find it making provision for the poor in all the acts of religion. . . . It is the programme of a sort of theocratic socialism." (History of Israel, vol. 3, book 5:16.)

14 *A series of legends.* Daniel and his companions, Daniel 1. The story of the mother and her seven sons in the second book of Maccabees relates that in the time of the

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persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes seven sons were tortured to death one after the other before the eyes of the mother who "with a noble temper" besought them all to die rather than renounce their religion. The romance of the race-course is a far less beautiful story of the third book of Maccabees. Ptolemy IV, persecuting the Jews of Egypt, ordered them to be sent into the race-course where infuriated elephants were to trample them to death. The beasts were driven by the angels of God to turn on the soldiers of the king and the Jews were saved.

14 *The new messianic ideal.* "The original messianic hope did not expect an individual Messiah at all, but theocratic kings of the house of David. Subsequently . . . however, the Messiah was thought of as a human king and ruler but as one endowed by God with special gifts and powers." (Schürer, vol. 2, 2:29.)

15 *Essenism.* The Essenes though not mentioned in the Gospels had a strong influence on early Christianity. From a small beginning these ascetics grew into a mighty power. Renan calls Essenism "Judaism carried to its highest point" and "a foretaste of Christianity" (History of Israel, book 9). It was "the superlative degree" of Pharisaism, so far as the nobler side of Pharisaism went, but had no sympathy with the degenerate form of that doctrine so prominent at Jerusalem. It laid little or no stress on the observance of minor matters of the Torah. Graetz says that the Essenes "believed that through an ascetic life they might re-awaken the long-silent echo of the heavenly voice and, this end gained, prophecy would be renewed." They were famed as workers of miracles.

16 *Literature designated Sibylline.* The sibyl and her oracular utterances were of course the invention of the Greeks but this style of literature had many imitators both Jewish and Christian. When other methods of reaching

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Greek and Roman culture with religious propaganda had failed, "it might be hoped," says Schürer, "that entrance to extensive circles would be obtained under this form."

29 *Resemblances between him and Philo.* Philo of Alexandria, "the Jewish Plato," is the author of many works of the loftiest spirit. Perfectly conversant with the literature of Greece he remained loyal to the religion of his fathers, yet so universal was his philosophy that Jews and Greeks equally admired him and he so pleased the early Christians that he is referred to by them as one of the fathers of the church. "Philo gives us the first example of an attempt, since so often made, to reduce Judaism to a sort of natural religion or deism by diluting the element of revelation and exhibiting the minute directions of the Torah as simple precepts of natural reason or judicious laws of health" (History of Israel, 10:13). A suggestion has been made to the effect that although Jesus did not know the Greek language or literature there must have been in Galilee some remnants of Greek thought. The attempt to Hellenize Judæa was not so remote that traces might not have lingered in the open-air discussions of the thoughtful Jews, although they would naturally have been ignorant of the origin of their ideas.

62 *The thoughts of . . . Hillel.* Hillel's name came to be a synonym for gentleness and toleration among the Jews. It is related of him that a pagan once mockingly said he would adopt Judaism if Hillel would teach him the whole Law while he stood on one foot. The sage smilingly replied that this was an easy matter: "Do not unto others that which you would not have them do unto you. This is the whole Law, the rest is but a commentary on this."

64 *Jesus did not speak against the Mosaic law.* The Jewish Encyclopedia in a careful study of the life of



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Jesus thus sums up what Jewish scholars consider to have been his attitude toward the Law:

“Almost at the beginning of his evangelical career Jesus differentiated himself from John the Baptist in two directions: (1) comparative neglect of the Mosaic or rabbinic law; and (2) personal attitude toward infractions of it. In many ways his attitude was specifically Jewish, even in directions which are usually regarded as signs of Judaic narrowness. Jesus appears to have preached regularly in the synagogue, which would not have been possible if his doctrines had been recognized as being essentially different from the current Pharisaic beliefs. In his preaching he adopted the popular method of *mashal*, or parable, of which about thirty-one examples are instanced in the synoptic Gospels, forming indeed the larger portion of his recorded teachings. It is obvious that such a method is liable to misunderstanding; and it is difficult in all cases to reconcile the various views that seem to underlie the parables. One of these parables deserves special mention here, as it has obviously been changed, for dogmatic reasons, so as to have an anti-Jewish application. There is little doubt that Joseph Halévy is right (*Revue des Etudes Juives* 4:249-255) in suggesting that in the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:17-37) the original contrast was between the priest, the Levite, and the ordinary Israelite—representing the three great classes into which Jews then were divided. The point of the parable is against the sacerdotal class, whose members indeed brought about the death of Jesus. Later, ‘Israelite’ or ‘Jew’ was changed into ‘Samaritan,’ which introduces an element of inconsistency, since no Samaritan would have been found on the road between Jericho and Jerusalem.

“While the aim of Jesus was to redeem those who had strayed from the beaten path of morality, he yet restricted

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his attention and that of his followers to the lost sons of Israel. He particularly forbade his disciples to seek heathens and Samaritans (Matt. 10:5), and for the same reason at first refused to heal the Syrophenician woman. His choice of twelve apostles had distinct reference to the tribes of Israel. He regarded dogs and swine as unholy (Matt. 7:6). His special prayer is merely a shortened form of the third, fifth, sixth, ninth and fifteenth of the Eighteen Benedictions. Jesus wore the *zizit* (Matt. 9:20); he went out of his way to pay the Temple tax of two drachmas (*ib.* 17:24-27); and his disciples offered sacrifice (*ib.* 5:23-24). In the Sermon on the Mount he expressly declared that he had come not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it (*ib.* 5:17, quoted in *Shab.* 116b), and that not a jot or tittle of the Law should ever pass away (*ib.* 5:18; comp. Luke 16:17). It would even appear that later tradition regarded him as scrupulous in keeping the whole Law (comp. John 8:46).

“Yet in several particulars Jesus declined to follow the directions of the Law, at least as it was interpreted by the rabbis. . . . His attitude toward the Law is perhaps best expressed in an incident which though recorded in only one manuscript of the Gospel of Luke (6:4 in the Codex Bezae) bears internal signs of genuineness. He is there reported to have met a man laboring on the Sabbath day,—a sin deserving of death by stoning according to the Mosaic law. Jesus said to the man: ‘Man, if thou knowest what thou doest, blessed art thou; but if thou knowest not, cursed art thou and a transgressor of the Law.’ According to this the Law should be obeyed unless a higher principle intervenes. . . .

“It is however exaggerated to regard these variations from current practices as exceptionally abnormal at the beginning of the first century. The existence of a whole

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class of Am ha-Arez [those called 'sinners' by the Pharisees] shows that the rigor of the Law had not yet spread throughout the people."

66 *Phrases already current.* Graetz surmises that this prayer was in use among the Essenes.

85 *His ideas on the kingdom.* The Jewish encyclopedia, in its article on Jesus, says:

"In essentials Jesus' teaching was that of John the Baptist and it laid emphasis on two points: (1) repentance and (2) the near approach of the kingdom of God. One other point is noted by Christian theologians as part of his essential teaching, namely, insistence on the fatherhood of God. This is such a commonplace in the Jewish liturgy and in Jewish thought that it is scarcely necessary to point out its essentially Jewish character (see Father). As regards repentance its specially Jewish note has been recently emphasized by C. G. Montefiore (Jewish Quarterly Review, Jan. 1904), who points out that Christianity lays less stress upon this side of religious life than Judaism; so that in this direction Jesus is certainly more Jewish than Christian. As regards the notion of 'the kingdom of heaven' the title itself (*malkut shamayim*) is specifically Jewish; and the content of the concept is equally so (see Kingdom of God). Jesus seems to have shared in the belief of his contemporaries that some world-catastrophe was at hand in which this kingdom would be reinstated on the ruins of a fallen world."

113 *A problematical person named Aristion.* "If by chance anyone came who had followed the elders I examined the words of the elders; what said Andrew or Peter or Philip or Thomas or James or what John or Matthew or any other of the Lord's disciples, as for instance what Aristion and the elder John, our Lord's disciples, say." (Papias in Eusebius 3: 39).

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113 *An influential group.* In the appendix to *The Gospels* (volume 5 of the *origins of Christianity*) Renan deals with the history of the family of Jesus. There is reason to believe, he says, that Judas the brother of Jesus succeeded his brother James as head of the church at Jerusalem. He was at any rate connected with the development of early Christianity. Simon and Joseph remained obscure. Simeon, son of Cleophas, was called the second bishop of Jerusalem and was succeeded by his nephew Judah. Eusebius (*Ecclesiastical History* 2:20) relates that grandsons of Judas were brought before Domitian who had heard them credited with descent from ancient Hebrew kings and the expectation of a new kingdom. They explained that the kingdom they expected was a heavenly one and were released by the emperor.

126 *Relations with the Essenes.* Graetz, in common with various other critics, makes the closest connection between Christianity and Essenism; he calls the new faith "an offshoot of Essenism." John the Baptist he considers entirely an Essene and Jesus he makes one also although in a less full fellowship with that ascetic brotherhood; the early Jewish Christians were "practically Essenes." Renan considers the direct connection doubtful but the resemblance he admits is deep; "the spirit in both was the same."

133 *Ebionites.* Eusebius declares that these Judaizing Christians were called Ebionites "because of the poverty of their understanding." "The unfortunate Ebionites," says Gibbon (*History of Rome* 2:15), "rejected from one religion as apostates and from the other as heretics, found themselves obliged to assume a more decided character; and although some traces of that obsolete sect may be discovered as late as the fourth century, they insensibly melted away into either the church or the synagogue."

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157 *Mariamne, daughter of a certain Simon.* This woman is not to be confounded with the high-minded Asmonean princess who had been put to death at the command of her suspicious husband.

167 *Affiliation with Judaism.* "Considering the wall of rigid separation which, as regards matters of religion, the Jews had erected between themselves and the Gentiles it would not readily occur to one that these latter were also permitted to take part in the worship at Jerusalem. And yet that such was the case is a fact as well authenticated as any fact could be. Nor are we thinking of the large body of proselytes. . . . No, we have in view such as we were Gentiles, who in sacrificing at Jerusalem would by no means care to acknowledge that in so doing they were professing their belief in the *superstitio Judaica*." (Schürer, 1, 2:24, appendix.)

170 *The day on which he uttered this saying.* It is on phrases of this sort that the critics fell when the Life of Jesus first appeared. The conversation being without hearers other than the two concerned is open to doubt by any critic as Renan admits in his own note. In his monograph on The Value of the Fourth Gospel he says further: "The details of the dialogue are evidently fictitious. On the other hand the topography of verses 3-6 is satisfactory. . . . There is no rigorous authenticity in such sentences. Can we admit that Jesus or the Samaritan woman related the conversation they had together? . . . Here then is an anecdote which we can no more accept literally than any other anecdote of history. But an anecdote often has its own truth. If Jesus never uttered that divine word the word is none the less his; it never would have existed without him."

186 *Miracles.* Strauss in his Life of Jesus carefully examines the miracles one by one and dismisses them as

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myths. Renan's inability to reach this solution of the difficulty and his theory that Jesus allowed himself to be considered a miracle-worker naturally aroused a storm of protests. This chapter was so violently attacked by different parties that it was omitted in a special edition,—see *The Story of the Book*. Graetz, whose Jewish birth as well as his scholarship and candor make him an interesting critic of these events, seems to be much of Renan's opinion. After a tribute to the lofty character of Jesus he adds:

“Though these stories may in part be due to an inclination to exaggerate and idealize they must doubtless have had some foundation in fact. Miraculous cures—such for example as the exorcism of those possessed by demons—belonged so completely to the personality of Jesus that his followers boasted more of the exercise of that power than of the purity and holiness of their conduct. If we are to credit the historical accounts of that period, the people also admired Jesus more for the command he displayed over demons and Satan than for his moral greatness.”

221 *The sacred feast.* Josephus and Philo give long accounts of the Essenes and the latter in his treatise on *The Contemplative Life* analyzes at length the customs of the Therapeutæ of Egypt, a band of ascetics apparently more monastic in their habits than the Essenes. Renan is not prepared to accept all Philo's statements as strictly historical but assumes some basis for them (*History of Israel*, book 10:15). The Essenes entered their common dining-room, says Josephus, “after a pure manner as into a holy temple,” clothed in white and freshly bathed. He adds: “Before [a new brother] is allowed to touch their common food he is obliged to take tremendous oaths” (*Wars* 2:8). The Therapeutæ according to Philo were accustomed to eat together bread and salt and to drink water; hyssop was allowed those who needed something more stimulating.



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260 *A council was called by the chief priests.* Renan was criticized for following on this point the fourth Gospel, a production written at a comparatively late date by a strongly anti-Jewish element of the Christian church. This narrative is consistent with the point of view of the writer who makes the word "Jew" synonymous with "enemy of Jesus" and does not coincide with the apparent ignorance of the personality of Jesus which led the dwellers at Jerusalem to ask who he was when he entered the city for the last time and which required also a guide to arrest him. Renan defends his position in his monograph on the fourth Gospel and considers this narrative "much more probable" than that of the Synoptics.

272 *Motives impossible to explain.* Various opinions were held in the early church as to the motives which led Judas to betray his master. One sect, the Cainites, held him in reverence according to Tertullian and Irenæus. The Cainites believed that out of zeal for the truth Judas "looking to the salvation of mankind delivered up Christ" (De Præscriptionibus, 47). Irenæus explains the doctrines of this heretical sect in much the same way (Against Heresies, 5).

281 *The Talmud adds:* In the Jewish writings of the centuries immediately following the time of Jesus he is referred to under various names, as Ben Stada and Ben Pandeira. He is said to have "brought magic from Egypt" and a number of passages relate that "they brought Ben Stada to the Beth Din [the tribunal] and stoned him." One long and interesting paragraph, from which the name has been almost erased by some zealot will serve as an example. It reads (B Sanhedrim 43):

"And it is tradition on the eve of Pesah they hung Jeshu [the Nazarene]. And the crier went forth before him 40 days saying Jeshu [the Nazarene] goeth forth to be stoned

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because he hath practised magic and deceived and led astray Israel. Anyone who knoweth aught in his favor let him come and declare concerning him. And they found naught in his favor. And they hung him on the eve of Pesah. Ulla says: 'Would it be supposed that [Jeshu the Nazarene] a revolutionary had aught in his favor.' He was a deceiver and the Merciful hath said (Deut. 13:8) 'Thou shalt not spare, neither shalt thou conceal him.' But it was different with [Jeshu the Nazarene] for he was of the kingdom."

283 *The Sanhedrim was assembled.* The Jewish Encyclopedia holds that the 23 priestly members of the Sanhedrim who "had been offended in both pride and pocket" by Jesus' action in cleansing the Temple "met informally after he had been seized and elicited sufficient to justify them in their own opinion in delivering him over to the Romans, as likely to cause trouble by his claims or pretensions to the messiahship, which of course would be regarded by them as rebellion against Rome. Nothing corresponding to a Jewish trial took place although it was by the action of the priests that Jesus was sent before Pontius Pilate."

287 *The acts of Pilate.* Philo in the *Legatio ad Caium* 38 refers to Pilate as a man "very merciless as well as very obstinate by nature; he would do nothing to please the Jews." Josephus gives an account of his troubles with the Jews (*Antiquities* 18:3:1, 2):

"So Pilate introduced Cæsar's effigies which were upon the ensigns and brought them into the city; whereas our Law forbids the very making of images; on which account the former procurators were wont to make their entry into the city with such ensigns as had not those ornaments. . . . And when the Jews petitioned him again [on the sixth day] he gave a signal to the soldiers to en-

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compass them around and threatened that their punishment should be no less than immediate death unless they would leave off disturbing him and go their ways home. But they threw themselves upon the ground and laid their necks bare and said they would take their death very willingly rather than the wisdom of their laws should be transgressed; upon which Pilate was deeply affected with their firm resolution to keep their laws inviolable and presently commanded the images to be carried back from Jerusalem to Cesarea.

“But Pilate undertook to bring a current of water to Jerusalem and did it with the sacred money and derived the origin of the stream from the distance of two hundred furlongs. However the Jews were not pleased with what had been done about this water and many ten thousands of the people got together and made a clamour against him. So he habited a great number of his soldiers in their habit who carried daggers in their garments and sent them to a place where they might surround them. . . . He gave the soldiers the signal which had been beforehand agreed upon: who laid much greater blows upon them than Pilate had commanded them and equally punished those that were tumultuous and those that were not, nor did they spare them in the least. . . . There were a great number of them slain by this means.”

The act which caused the removal of Pilate was concerned with the Samaritans. A great crowd gathered together at Mount Gerizzim led by a man who claimed that he would show them the sacred vessels of Moses, or the bones of Moses according to other accounts. “Soldiers of Pilate fell upon those that were gotten together in the village; and when they came to an action some of them they slew and others of them they put to flight and took a great many alive, the principal of whom and also the most

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potent of those that fled away Pilate ordered to be slain" (Antiquities 18:4:1).

288 *Pilate then would have liked to save Jesus.* Criticisms of Renan's treatment of the trial of Jesus brought out a quantity of controversial writing. In the *Allegemeine Zeitung des Judenthums* for 1865—to take but one example—the editor, the learned Dr. Ludwig Philippson, deals with the question from the liberal Jewish point of view. He argues that the character of Pilate as shown in the Gospels is quite inconsistent with what history tells of him, that the narrative shows ignorance of Jewish customs which would suggest a Gentile and anti-Jewish editor, that claims of messiahship were promptly punished by the Romans for fear of their effect on a people as fiercely resentful of conquest as were the Jews of that period, while there is no recorded instance of persecution of a self-styled Messiah by the Jews themselves. He admits that accusations were very likely brought against Jesus by Jews and possibly even by one of his own disciples, but denies absolutely that there was ever an actual trial by the Sanhedrim or a clamorous demand for the execution of Jesus. Strauss who has no brief for the Jewish people remarks of the trial of Jesus: "In all this there is nothing historically improbable, though we cannot overlook the fact that the resistance of Pilate is worked out with especial industry by the evangelist in order to bring out in strong relief the innocence of Jesus on the one hand and the obstinate wickedness of the Jews on the other." He later points out that the washing of hands in token of innocence was a Jewish custom not likely to have been adopted by a Roman of Pilate's temper. "That Pilate should have been deeply interested in attesting his innocence of the execution is not so probable as that the Christians should have been deeply interested in thus gaining a testimony to the

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innocence of their Messiah: whence there arises a suspicion that perhaps Pilate's act of washing his hands owes its origin to them alone" (Life of Jesus, Part 3:3). Monsieur Havet of the Collège de France in a most appreciative review of Renan's work has some criticisms to make on this subject (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1863).

291 *Thus attired he was led to the tribunal.* Scourging a condemned criminal was forbidden by the Law of Moses. Graetz points out that the excessive cruelties and indignities to which Jesus was subjected, all of them Roman in character and contrary to Jewish custom, were confused in the minds of the early Christians with the enmity of the priests to Jesus and "instead of turning their wrath on cruel Rome they made the Judæan people responsible for inhuman deeds."

317 *Josephus mentions his execution.* The passage in Josephus which refers to Jesus is generally admitted to be in whole or in part the work of a Christian. The disputed point is whether the entire passage or only a portion of it is interpolated. The weight of authority is perhaps with the former opinion, although many scholars, Renan included, hold that the paragraph is in part from the pen of Josephus (*Antiquities* 18:3:3). The passage runs:

"Now there was about this time Jesus a wise man, if it be lawful to call him man for he was a doer of wonderful works,—a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ; and when Pilate at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us had condemned him to the cross those that loved him at the first did not forsake him for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day."

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318 *The essential work of Jesus.* The historian's final word on this subject will be found in the last chapter of the History of Israel, written so short a time before his death.

"A fundamental opinion, in which I grow more and more confirmed is not only that Jesus lived but that he was great and noble. His greatness and his nobility may have been as much hidden as you choose to imagine and in as small a circle as you will, but they were real,—a thousand times more real than the pale grandeurs and faint beauties of earth. . . . To be loved as he was loved he must have been supremely lovable. The resurrection above all is a convincing proof of this. On vague hints, the third day after his death the women among his disciples, especially Mary of Magdala, imagined that Jesus had come to life and gone into Galilee. This was a mighty miracle wrought by love. Love, stronger than death, restored life to the beloved. A shadow, a pale myth, could not have worked that miracle. . . . The world now worships him whom these people loved so passionately.

"We therefore consider that there is much historic truth in the Gospels. But even were there little the great fact remains. That fact is the foundation of Christianity. The details may be hidden; the progress of the idea is clear. Messianism in travail since the days of Daniel, reached its perfection in Jesus. For all who believe in the Messiah he is the Messiah. For those who wish the Son of Man he is the Son of Man. For those who seek the Logos, the Son of God, the Spirit, he is the Logos, the Son of God, the Spirit. He is the kingdom of God, the resurrection, the life, the judgment. . . .

"Judaism and Christianity will both disappear. The work of the Jew will have its end; the work of the Greek—in other words, science and civilization, rational, ex-



## NOTES ON THE TEXT

perimental, without charlatanism, without revelation, a civilization founded on reason and liberty—will endure forever; and if this earth should ever be untrue to its duty there will be others who will arise to push to the end the programme of all life,—light, reason and truth. The trace of Israel, however, will be eternal. Israel first gave form to the cry of the people, to the plaint of the poor, to the obstinate demand of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.”

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